ṚGVEDA DARŚANA

VOLUME 4

PURUSHA SŪKTA

Vidyālankāra
S. K. RAMACHANDRA RAO

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RGVEDA DARSANA

A SET OF THIRTEEN VOLUMES

VOLUME FOUR

Purusha Sukta

Vidyalankara

Prof S. K. Ramachandra Rao

Prof S. K. Ramachandra Rao Memorial Trust®

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Introduction

The present volume focuses attention on the most popular of the Vedic hymns, namely the Purusha Sukta. The idea of the Purusha has been explained in some detail and the enigmatic concept of Purusha-medha has also been considered in its proper perspective. It is hoped that by presenting this traditional interpretation, many of the misconceptions will be removed.

S. K. Ramachandra Rao

In the first edition of this fourth volume, my father had published as an appendix a revised version of a booklet entitled *'A True Interpretation of Vedic Sacrifice'* authored by a scholar of the previous generation, Shri Srimushna Narasimhacharya. This has not been included in this edition. Readers interested in this booklet can refer to the book 'Purusha Sukta and Vedic Sacrifice' published by Sri Satguru Publications, a division of the Indian Books Centre, Delhi. This reprint of Prof S. K. Ramachandra Rao's fourth volume of the Rg Veda Darsana was brought out in 2011.

S. R. Sudarshan

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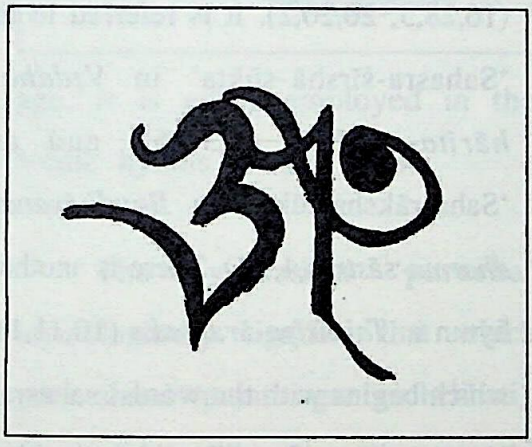
CHAPTER ONE

PURUSHA - SŪKTA

INTRODUCTION



It is said that the Savitṛ of the Gāyatrī-mantra is identical with the Purusha of Purusha-sūkta (*Ṛgveda,* 10, 90), and that the entire Vedic canon follows the lead of Purusha-sūkta ('vedāh purusha-sūktagāh'). The *Chhāndogya-upanishad,* while eulogizing the Gāyatrī-mantra cites a mantra from Purusha-sūkta (10,90,2), with the words 'tad etad ṛchābhya-nūktam', and draws a correspondance between the four pādas (lines) of Gāyatrī and the four pādas (quarters) of Purusha. Śaṁkara's comments thereon are illuminating : "Gāyatri is the name for Brahman. But Gāyatri represents the mutable world of names and forms, and Brahman is beyond this; higher than this; for Brahman is the reality, immutable and indescribable. Brahman is called Purusha, for he completes the three pādas of Gāyatrī, perfecting it ('purushah sarva-pūraṇāt'), and he abides in the human heart without really revealing himself ('puri śayanāt')". All phenomena, although

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distinguished into three realms, three branches of learning, and three vital currents (corresponding with the three pādas of Gāyatrī) is in fact but one aspect of Gāyatrī (or Brahman); comprising of all phenomena, mobile and immobile; and beyond this is the fourth pāda of Gāyatrī (darśata), which is the spirit that is responsible for the three other pādas. The part that is manifest is no doubt suggestive of the Purusha's glory and majesty; but the real nature of Purusha is higher than this. Purusha is perfection. And the entire Veda and all the scriptural lore are a statement of this transcendental nature of Purusha. Ānanda-tīrtha says:

स पूर्णत्वात्पुमान्नाम पौरुषे सूक्त ईरितः ।
स एवाखिलवेदार्थः सर्वशास्त्रार्थ एव च ॥

The hymn known as Purusha-sūkta (or Paurusha) which is to be found originally in *Ṛgveda* (10,90), is also found in *Vājasaneya-samhitā* (31,1), *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (13,6,2,11), *Taittirīya-āraṇyaka* (3,12,1), and *Āpastamba-śrauta-sūtra* (16,28,3; 20,20,2). It is referred to as 'Sahasra-śīrshā-sūkta' in *Vṛddha-hārīta-samhitā* (5,3,86), and as 'Sahasrāksha-sūkta' in *Baudhāyana-dharma-śāstra* (4,7,5). There is another hymn in *Taittirīya-āraṇyaka* (10,11,1), which begins with the words' sahasra-śīrsham devam', and which is also an eulogy of Purusha, and significantly this is named 'mahā-nārāyaṇīyam', pertaining to Nārāyaṇa who is the seer of the Purusha-Sūkta.

The expression 'purusha' is not to be construed in the sense of 'man' (human being), although this meaning became prevalent at a later

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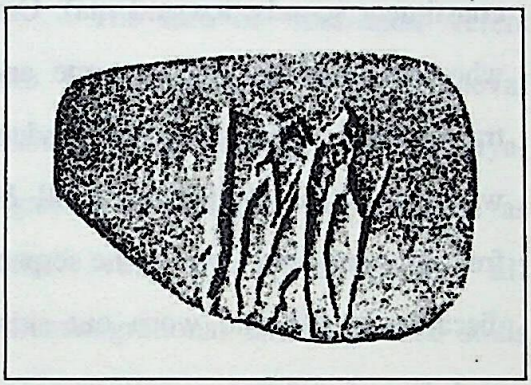

age. It is never employed in the Vedic hymns in this sense.

The expression 'purusha' etymologically signifies that which goes ahead (purati agre gachchhati), 'that which fills all with strength' ('piparti pūrayati balam yah'), 'that which lies inside the township' (purshu śete yah') ('pura kushan' Uṇādi-sūtra, 4,74). It is derived from the root 'pṛī' which has the sense of protecting, pervading, filling (pālana-pūraṇayoh). The word has the meaning of the spirit in contradistinction to matter (prakṛti); in the Sānkhya system of thought, purusha (masculine gender) is distinguished from prakṛti (matter, nature, feminine gender). Prakṛti evolves, changes and binds; but it is inert and has therefore to depend upon the presence of purusha, to enliven, impel and vivify. Purusha here corresponds to Savitṛ in the sense of stimulator or creator of all things. All things in their individual forms are regarded as 'embodied' (viz. having bodies, which are filled by souls, and hence called puras). We read in *Bhāgavata* (7,14,37) :

पुराण्यनेन सृष्टानि नृ-तिर्यगृषि-देवताः ।
शेते जीवेन रूपेण पुरेषु पुरुषो ह्यसौ ॥

The purusha is so called because he creates all the species of beings (puras), humans, beasts, sages and gods, and lies in each of the beings in the form of soul. Elsewhere,

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purusha is identified with Vishṇu, for he abides within the body which is called 'pura':

पुरुसंज्ञे शरीरेऽस्मिन् शयनात्पुरुषो हरिः ।

It is in this sense that the lexicon, *Amara-kosha,* takes the word purusha as synonymous with 'ātman' (3,3,218). Purusha, as the ultimate and unitary cosmological principle as well as the subtlest psychic reality, occurs in the hymns of *Ṛgveda,* and in the Upanishads.

In *Praśnopanishat* (5,5), Purusha is identified with the person who is the inner spirit of the Sun (sūryāntargata-purusha), who is to be contemplated upon as Om (with three constituent sounds: a,u and ma). One who meditates on this supreme and transcendental Purusha, resplendent with the lustre of the sun, will be freed from all sins, even as the serpent discards its old and worn out skin:

यः पुनरेतं त्रिमात्रेण ओमित्यनेनैवाक्षरेण परं पुरुषमभिध्यायीत । स तेजसि पुरुषे सम्पन्नः । यथा पादोदरस्त्वचा निर्मुच्यत एवं ह वै स पाप्मना विनिर्मुक्तः ॥

In this state of liberating enlightenment, the devotee has the vision of Purusha, who abides hidden within his own body (or heart), and who is beyond this 'soul-mass' (jīva-ghana), which is available for immediate experience:

स एतस्मात् जीवघनात् परात्परं पुरिशयं पुरुषमीक्षते ॥

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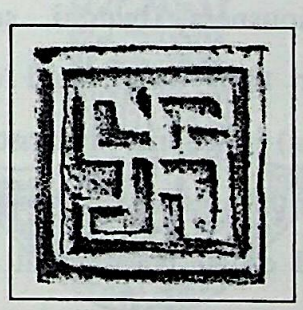
The idea of 'soul-mass' refers to Hiraṇya-garbha, the primaeval source of all beings. This Hiraṇya-garbha is explained by Śaṁkara as the very own self of all transmigrational and embodied souls ('sarveshām samsāriṇām jīvānām ātma-bhūtah'); it is the inner spirit which is the distinguishing mark of the beings (sa hyantarātmā liṅga-rūpeṇa sarva-bhūtānam); in it are settled all the souls (tasmin hi lingātmani samhatās sarve jīvāh). It is the inner reality of all physical constitutions (sarva-śarīrānu-pravishṭam), which can be contemplated upon as the very principle that abides in the solar orb. *Īśa-upanishad* (16) speaks of this indwelling reality as the Purusha, whose limbs are the three vyāhṛtis ('yosāvasau purushah', comm. āditya-maṇḍalastho vyāhṛtyavayavah purushah, purushākāratvāt). The same reality fills and animates the entire universe as the spirit (vital energy) and consciousness (pūrṇam vā anena prāṇa-buddhyātmanā jagat-samastam iti purushah.)



In *Kaṭha-upanishad* (3,6,12), the Purusha is described as of the size of the thumb (aṅgushṭha-mātrah), and dwelling in the centre of ones own being (madhya ātmani). The measure of the thumb signifies the extent of the heart-lotus, within the opening of which the spirit rests and where the yogis can visualize it with ease. And

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the Purusha is luminous like fire, but devoid of smoke (4,13, 'jyotir ivādhūmakah'). This reality is all-inclusive and transcendent : sense-functions (indriya) are superior to the physical organs; mind (manas) is higher than the sense-functions; consciousness (buddhi, sattva) is higher than mind; and the soul (mahān) is superior to consciousness. Higher than the soul is the unmanifest ground of all phenomenal existence (avyakta). Transcending even this unmanifest is Purusha. Transcendence or superiority is in terms of inclusion (vyāpakatā). What is higher includes the lower. The unmanifest which is the highest in the phenomenal series is also called ākāśa, which is all pervasive. Ākāśa, according to *Brahmavidyopanishat* (14), signifies the soul (jīva), 'vāyu' and prāṇa' ('vāyuh prāṇas tathākāśah trividho jīva-saṁjñakah'). And Purusha who transcends ākāśa, cannot be perceived or identified by any sign that is valid in the phenomenal sphere (therefore called 'aliṅga', liṅgyate gamyate yena tal liṅgam, buddhyādi; tad avidyamānam) (6,7 and 8):

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनो मनसः सत्त्वमुत्तमम् ।
सत्त्वादधि महानात्मा महतोऽव्यक्तमुत्तमम् ॥
अव्यक्तात्तु परः पुरुषः व्यापकोऽलिङ्ग एव च ।
यं ज्ञात्वा मुच्यते जन्तुरमृतत्वं च गच्छति ॥

Muṇḍakopanishat not only identifies Purusha with immutability and eternity (1,2,11), but speaks of him as filling all things from within and without, although devoid of form ('divyo hy amūrtah purushah, sa bāhyābhyantaro hy ajah', 2,1,2). He is not to be mistaken for the

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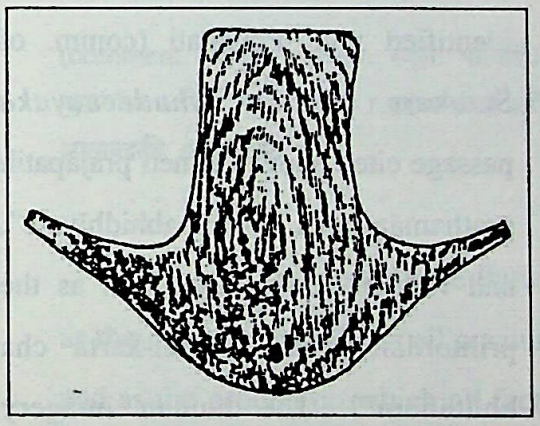
undifferentiated, unmanifest, unchanging and undying world-principle (akshara); which is the ultimate stuff and source of all existence; he is in fact beyond it (aksharāt paratah parah). Given below is the explanation offered by Śaṁkara:

अतः अक्षरात् नामरूपबीजोपाधिलक्षितस्वरूपात् सर्वकार्यकरणबीजत्वेन उपलक्ष्यमाणत्वात् परं तत्त्वं तदुपाधिलक्षणं अव्याकृताख्यमक्षरं सर्वविकारेभ्यः तस्मात् परतः अक्षरात् परः । निरुपाधिकः पुरुष इत्यर्थः । यस्मिन् तदाकाशाख्यमक्षरं सव्यवहारविषयं ओतं प्रोतं च ॥

Here, two aspects of 'akshara' are distinguished: one which has names and forms, and constitutes the source of all effects (bodies) and their instruments (senses); and the other free from all such conditions. The former is undifferentiated (avyākṛta), and is unchanged amidst all change in the phenomenal presentation. This is the undying world-principle; and the aspect transcending it is Purusha that is free and pure, altogether unconditioned by phenomenal processes.



This Upanishat also points out (2,1,2) that it is from the former aspect of Purusha that the world proceeds: life-processes, mind, sense-functions, elemental bricks of the material world and the entire universe. In a sense, the universe itself is this Purusha (2,1,10 'purusha evedam viśvam'), and it is hidden in the

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heart-cave of all living beings ('nihitam guhāyām', op.cit.). And this Purusha is conceived in human image ('purusha-vidha', cf. also *Bṛhadāraṇyaka,* 1,4,1, 'ātmai-vedam agra āsīt purusha-vidhah'), and is identified with Prajāpati (comm. of Śaṁkara on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* passage cited above "ātmeti prajāpatih prathamāṇḍajah śarīrī abhidhīyate", and Rāmānuja described him as the primordial creator, "ādi-kartā cha bhūtānām"). The human imagery regards Agni as the Purusha's head, Sun and Moon as his eyes, the directions alround as his ears, the Veda as his speech (viz. open mouth); Vāyu is his vital current, and the whole universe is settled in his heart. The earth itself emanates from his feet. And this Purusha is the inner spirit of all creatures :

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च ।
खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ॥(3)
अग्निर्मूर्धा चक्षुषी चन्द्रसूर्यौ
दिशः श्रोत्रे वग्विवृताश्च वेदाः ।
वायुः प्राणो हृदयं विश्वमस्य
पद्भ्यां पृथिवी ह्येष सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ॥(4)

The Upanishat proceeds to remind us of what the Purusha-sūkta itself elaborates; that the three Vedas emanate from the Purusha as also all the sacrifices and initiations into them, the year with all the seasons, the performers of rituals, the worlds, and all kinds of creatures (human, angels, beasts, birds and so on). The text adds that in-breathing and out-breathing, the ritual offerings, the penances and austerities, faith, truthfulness and duties devolving on us, all come out of this Purusha and take shape.

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बह्वीः प्रजाः पुरुषात्संप्रसूताः ॥ (5)
तस्मादृचः साम यजूंषि दीक्षा
यज्ञाश्च सर्वे क्रतवो दक्षिणाश्च ।
संवत्सरश्च यजमानश्च लोकाः
सोमो यत्र पवते यत्र सूर्यः ॥ (6)
तस्माच्च देवा बहुधा संप्रसूताः
साध्या मनुष्याः पशवो वयांसि ।
प्राणापान व्रीहियवौ तपश्च
श्रद्धा सत्यं ब्रह्मचर्यं विधिश्च ॥ (7)

(comment : व्रीहियवौ । हविरर्थौ ॥ तपः । कर्माङ्गं पुरुषसंस्कारलक्षणं स्वतन्त्रं फलसाधनम् ॥ श्रद्धा । यत्पूर्वकः सर्वपुरुषार्थसाधनप्रयोगः चित्तप्रसादः आस्तिक्यबुद्धिः ॥ सत्यम् । अनृतवर्जनं यथाभूतार्थवचनं च अपीडाकरम् ॥ विधिः । इतिकर्तव्यता ॥)

The account is completed by drawing our attention to the fact that this Purusha is in fact the indwelling spirit of beings; he abides in the interior of the being, like the very Self of the self, enveloped by the gross body and the elemental ingredients thereof:

येनैष भूतैस्तिष्ठति ह्यन्तरात्मा ॥ (9)

(comment : भूतैः । पञ्चभिः स्थूलैः परिवेष्टितः ॥ अन्तरात्मा । लिङ्गं सूक्ष्मं शरीरम् । तद्ध्यन्तराले शरीरस्य आत्मवद्वर्तते इत्यन्तरात्मा ॥)

A similar account of the Purusha as the indwelling spirit in all creatures, and as the ground on which all factors of physical existence arise occurs in *Praśnopanishat* (6,2, to 6). The factors constitute the form of the Purusha. They incline towards the purusha-image (purushāyaṇāh). But when they reach the Purusha, they lose their individual distinguishing marks and become known as the Purusha himself, even as the rivers that flow towards

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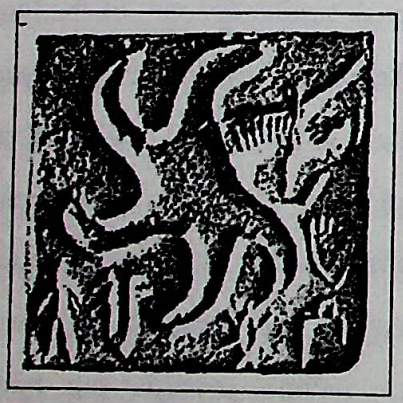
the ocean. The factors that constitute our physical existence are all settled in the Purusha, like spokes of the wheel in the hub.

इहैवान्तः शरीरे सोम्य स पुरुषो यस्मिन्नेताः षोडशकलाः प्रभवन्तीति ॥ (2)

षोडशकलाः पुरुषायणाः पुरुषं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति भिद्येते चासां पुरुषं इत्येवं प्रोच्यते ॥ (5)

अरा इव रथनाभौ कला यस्मिन्प्रतिष्ठिताः ॥ (6)



The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (1,4,1) derives the word 'purusha' in altogether a different manner. It is said here that the word has two parts 'pura' (pūrvam, at the beginning) and 'aushat' (burnt up, destroyed). The first part refers to the period prior to the creative process, while the second to the elimination of all obstructions and deficiencies. The entire passage begins with the statement that at the very beginning was this Self (ātmā) alone (and nothing other than this), and it assumed (for purposes of creation) the figure of a human being (purusha-vidha), viz. a composite being with organs like head, hands etc. (according to Śaṁkara), or with the well-known sheathes, three (speech, mind and vital current) or five (anna-maya, prāṇa-mya, mano-maya, vijñāna-maya and ānanda-maya) (according to Rāmānuja). The three sheathes in fact represent the three realms (loka): Speach is this earth (pṛthivī), mind or manas is the mid-region

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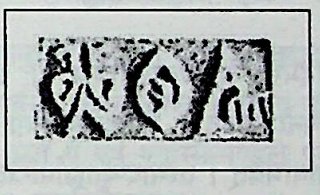
(antariksha), and vital current or prāṇa is the yonder world (dyauh). Alternately, they stand for celestial beings (devāh), the manes (pitarah) and the human beings (manushyāh) respectively. The three realms constitute the body of this Purusha or Prajāpati; and in this sense he is 'virāj'. The pre-virāj state is Brahman (absolute, undifferentiated, unconditioned, independent of all transactional modes of names and forms). Sureśvara's *Vārtika* on the above text, however, states that from Brahmā came out the Virāj, and from Virāj the Purusha ; from that, was brought forth all creatures.

विराजमसृजद् ब्रह्मा सोऽसृजत्पुरुषं विराट् ।
पुरुषं तं मनं विद्धि यस्येयं मानवी प्रजा ॥

In this explanation (117), Purusha is identified with Manu, the first-born and the progenitor of all beings. The Upanishadic passage speaks of Ātman in the sense of the primordial creative urge, which involves the human image.



This Ātman with the human image is indeed Prajāpati, the creator of all beings. He reflected on the situation prior to creation, and found that there was nothing whatsoever besides himself viz. no one to lord over himself or restrain in any way. He ejaculated 'I am' (aham asmi), and that became his nomenclature. That is the way in which all beings began identifying themselves. The 'I', pointing out to the self (ātman), was devoid of all limiting conditions.

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Prajāpati, in other words, was perfectly free to create whatever he fancied; he had nothing to curtail his powers or his choice. This is what is meant by his having burnt all obstructions at the very beginning.

आत्मैवेदमग्र आसीत्पुरुषविधः । सोऽनुवीक्ष्य नान्यदात्मनोऽपश्यत् । सोऽहमस्मीत्यग्रे व्याहरत् । ततोऽहंनामाभवत् । तस्मादप्येतर्ह्यामन्त्रितोऽहमित्यग्र उक्थत्वादन्यन्नाम प्रब्रूते, यदस्य भवति ।

स यत्पूर्वोऽस्मात्सर्वस्मात् सर्वान्पाप्मन औषत् तस्मात्पुरुष ओषति ह वै स तं योऽस्मात्पूर्वो बुभूषति य एवं वेद ॥

(comment : आत्मा । आत्मेति प्रजापतिः ॥ एव । अवधृतिः ।प्रजापतिशरीरेण अविभक्तमासीत् ॥ पुरुषविधः । शिरः पाण्यादिलक्षणो विराट् ॥ अथवा वाङ्मनःप्राणकोशान् त्रीन् । 'त्रयो लोका एत एव । वागेवायं लोकः । मनोऽन्तरिक्षलोकः । प्राणोऽसौ लोकः॥' (बृ० १,५,३)॥ त्रयो वेदाः एत एव ॥ (बृ० १,५,५) ॥ देवाः (वाक्) पितरो (मनः) मनुष्याः (प्राणः)॥

This Upanishat points out (2,3,1) that Brahman has two dimensions : with form (mūrta) and without form (amūrta). The former is accessible for transaction, while the latter is not. The former is available for direct observation (pratyaksha), while the latter is only indirectly experienced (paroksha). The purport of this distinction is to explain that the Purusha who is the indwelling spirit of the solar orb is also the Purusha who abides in the right eye of a being. The formless details include air (vāyu) and the atmosphere (antariksha). They are devoid of death of destruction, and are unmoving as well as pervasive. These two elements are in contrast to the third element, namely earth (pṛthvī), which is subject to death, decay and destruction. The essence of the three elements is the solar orb (maṇḍala) which word is derived from 'maṇḍa', having the

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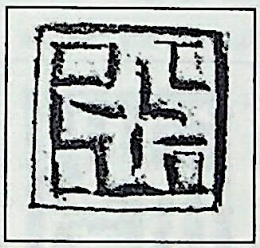
sense of essence, cream, substance) (cf. Br.2,2,2). Sureśvara says (44).

सारस्त्रयाणां भूतानां रसो मण्डलमुच्यते ।
एतत्साराणि हि त्रीणि भूतान्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥



The expression 'maṇḍala' which occurs in the Upanishadic passage is a technical one, which is employed in the context of the own-nature of the ultimate and indivisible constituents of the universe ('niravayava-paramāṇūnām svarūpam'), which are operational nevertheless; they are the causes for elements to come into existence. The solar orb or the maṇḍala, short for āditya-maṇḍala, is the causative essence of the three realms or elements: vāyu, antariksha and pṛthvī. In this sense it is Hiraṇya-garbha or the golden womb, and also Prāṇa, the main life-principle (2,3,2):

अथामूर्तं वायुरन्तरिक्षं च । एतदमृतमेतद्यदेतद्त्यत् । तस्यैतस्यामूर्तस्य एतस्यामृतस्य । एतस्य यतः एतस्य त्यस्य एष रसो य एष एतस्मिन्मण्डले पुरुषः तस्य ह्येष रसः । इत्यधिदैवतम् ॥

(द्वे वाव ब्रह्मणो रूपे मूर्तं चामूर्तं च ॥ मर्त्यं चामृतं च । स्थितं च यत् । सच्च त्यच्च ॥ 2,3,1)

(comment : अमृतं ध्रुवम् । यत् गतिपूर्वकं याति । त्यत् परोक्षाभिधानार्हम् । रसः सारिष्ठः । त्रयाणां भूतानां सारिष्ठः । मण्डले पुरुषः आदित्यान्तर्गतकारणात्मकः, हिरण्यगर्भः, प्राणः इत्यभिधीयते । अन्नरसमयादिषु श्रुत्यन्तरे पुरुषशब्द प्रयोगात्॥)

In the adhyātma context, the right eye is regarded as the essence (rasa) of a being, who in turn is the essence of the three factors (vāk, manas and prāṇa). And the 'person

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in the right eye' is the embodied soul (liṅgātma), for it is the right eye that is mainly the basis for the individual's transactions and phenomenal existence (2,3,4):

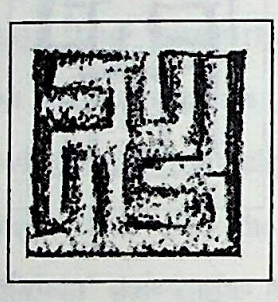
अथाध्यात्मम् । इदमेव मूर्तं यदन्यत्प्राणाच्च । यश्चायं अन्तरात्मन् (नि) आकाशः । एतन्मर्त्यम् । एतत् स्थितम् । एतत् सत् । तस्य स्थितस्य एतस्य सतः एष रसो यच्चक्षुः । सतो ह्येष रसः ॥

अथामूर्तम् । प्राणश्च यश्चायं अन्तरात्मन् (नि) आकाशः । एतदमृतम् । एतद्यत् । एतत् त्यत् । तस्यैतस्यामूर्तस्यामृतस्यैतस्य यतः एतस्य त्यस्य एष रसो योऽयं दक्षिणेऽक्षन्(णि) पुरुषः । तस्य ह्येष रसः ॥

(comment : दक्षिणाक्षन्पुरुषः लिङ्गात्मा परिगृह्यते । विशेषग्रहणं शास्त्रप्रत्यक्षात् । लिङ्गस्य हि दक्षिणे अक्षिणि विशेषतः अधिष्ठातृत्वम् ॥)

We read in *Maitrāyaṇīya-upanishat* (6,6): The sun is the visual apparatus. The special prowesses of a person are dependent upon this, which therefore is real (satya), and the Purusha is settled in the eyes.

आदित्यश्चक्षुः । चक्षुरायत्ता हि पुरुषस्य महती मात्रा । चक्षुषा ह्ययं मात्राश्चरति । सत्यं वै चक्षुः । अक्षिण्यवस्थितो हि पुरुषः । सर्वोऽर्थेषु चरति ॥



The correspondance between the solar orb in the universe and the visual apparatus in the individual is a prevailing idea in the Upanishadic lore. The eye is often termed the inner sun for the individual. Even as the sun measures out day and night, life-span of all beings, development and decay of all things, directions and durations, the eye also perceives, determines, resolves, plans and helps behaviour in general. The principle

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behind the sun and behind the eye is the Purusha. *Chhāndogya-upanishat* (1,6,6) describes the Purusha as the resplendent spirit dwelling inside the solar orb, brilliant like burnished gold, as well as in the creature's body filling it all over down to the very nail-tips, again luminous like gold :

य एषोऽन्तरादित्ये हिरण्मयः पुरुष दृश्यते । हिरण्मयः श्मश्रुर्हिरण्यकेश आप्रणखात्सर्व एव सुवर्णः ॥

Bṛhadāraṇyaka (5,5,2) makes an explicit statement to the effect that the Purusha indwelling in the solar orb and the Purusha abiding in the right eye (the left eye being represented by Moon) of a being are established in one another. Both are full of light and energy. If one is established by rays of light, the other is established by the vital currents.

तद्यत् तत्समसौ स आदित्यो य एष एतस्मिन्मण्डले पुरुषो यश्चायं दक्षिणेऽक्षिन् पुरुषः तावेतौ अन्योन्यस्मिन् प्रतिष्ठितौ । रश्मिभिरेषोऽस्मिन्प्रतिष्ठितः प्राणैरयममुष्मिन् ॥

Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (6,2,2,9) speaks of a seventeen-limbed Purusha, which is, for appearances, more human than solar. The limbs are: (1-10) the prāṇas (five major and five minor), (11-14) organs (two arms and two legs), (15) body as a whole (called here ātmā), (16) neck, and (17) head. This Purusha is designated as Prajāpati, whose extent is equal to that of Agni.

यद्वेव सप्तदश । सप्तदशो वै पुरुषः । दश प्राणाः । चत्वार्यङ्गानि । आत्मा पञ्चदशो । ग्रीवाः षोडश्यः ।

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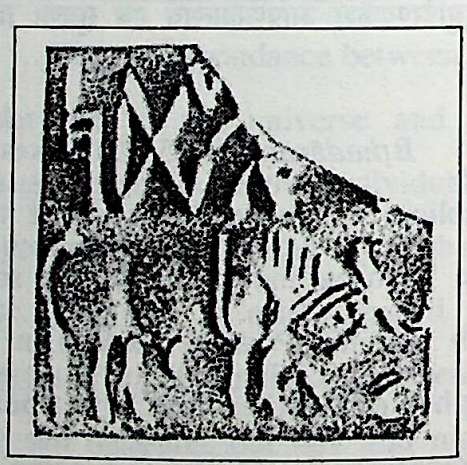
शिरः सप्तदशम् ॥ पुरुषः प्रजापतिः । अग्निर्यावान् अग्निर्यावत्यस्य मात्रा तावतैवैनमेतत्समिन्धे ॥

Prajāpati is here identified with Agni, who is the representative of Āditya on earth.

This sūkta refers, albeit in an indirect way, to the creation of the world by Purusha. There is another sūkta, which likewise makes a reference to creation, the well-known Nāsadīya-sūkta (RV, 10,129). *Taittirīya-āraṇyaka* (1,23, 1f) calls the Purusha by the expression Prajāpati, and describes how he became responsible for creation. At the beginning there was only water, and Prajāpati took shape and floated on its surface on the leaf of a lotus plant (pushkara-parṇa). In his interior, in his mind, there then arose a desire (urge, impetus, primordial will) to create all this (what we see now). Whatever now a person desires, he gives expression to it in speech and in action. This is the bridge between what exists not and what exists. The passage is accomplished by what is known as 'tapas', which word means austerity, penance, reflection, brooding, intense heat. Creation proceeds only through 'tapas'.



In the exhileration of tapas, Prajāpati shook his form vigorously. From the flesh-like constituents of his form came forth the sages known as

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Aruṇas, Ketus and Vātaraśanas; from his nail-like parts the sages known as Vaiknānasas; and from his hair-like parts Vālakhilyas. However, the essential aspect of the watery mass solidified in the form of a tortoise and issued out. Prajāpati inquired if this was the offspring of his own skin and flesh. The tortoise replied: 'No, I have been there all the time, even prior to all these beings that have now come out'. The tortoise-form was what appeared now, but the spirit of it was always there, and this was Purusha. This indeed is the Purusha-nature of the Purusha; the expression 'purusha' signifying 'what was there earlier' (pūrvam samabhūt). The Purusha, to demonstrate his power, arose then with a thousand heads, with a thousand eyes and a thousand feet. The number 'thousand' indicates vastness and immeasurable immensity of creation.

This account appears to be an introduction to Purusha-sūkta. The first words of the mantra of the sūkta are repeated here, with the suggestion of the context; illustrating the purusha-nature of the Purusha (purushasya purushatvam). The innumerable forms of creation are all emanations from a common foundation: the kāma of Prajāpati (viz. Purusha). The text of Purusha-sūkta presupposes this. The primaeval tortoise, which is but the essence (rasa) of the waters on which Prajāpati floated, represents Prakṛti; and Prakṛti, in the presence of Purusha, unfolds its manifold power and evolves into the entire universe. This is called the 'Virāṭ' (illumining itself in different and multiple forms),

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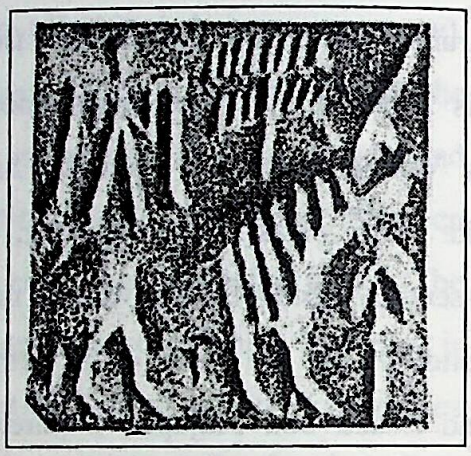
an aspect of Prakṛti, which also is referred to in the sūkta. Here is the text of the Āraṇyaka passage:

आपो वा इदमासन्त्सलिलमेव । स प्रजपितिरेकः पुष्करपर्णे समभवत् । तस्यान्तर्मनसि कामः समवर्तत । इदँ् सृजेयमिति । तस्माद्यत्पुरुषो मनसाऽभिगच्छति तद्वाचा वदति, तत्कर्मणा करोति । तदेषाभ्यनूक्ता (ऋ० १०,१२९, ४) -

'कामस्तदग्रे समवर्तताधि मनसो
रेतः प्रथमं यदासीत् ।
सतो बन्धुमसति निरविन्दन्
हृदि प्रतीष्या कवयो मनीषेति'

उपैनं तदुपनमति । यत्कामो भवति य एवं वेद । स तपो तप्यत ॥ तपस्तप्त्वा शरीरमधूनत । तस्य यन्मांसमासीत् ततोऽरुणाः केतवो वातरशना ऋषयः उदतिष्ठन् । ये नखाः ते वैखानसाः । ये वालाः ते वालखिल्याः । यो रसः सोऽपामन्तरतः कूर्मं भूत ँ्सर्पन्तं तमब्रवीत् - मम वै त्वङ्मांसा समभूत्? । नेत्यब्रवीत् - पूर्वमेवाहमिहासमिति ।

तत्पुरुषस्य पुरुषत्वम् । स सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् भूत्वोदतिष्ठत् ॥



The same text further identifies Prajāpati as the first born of the universal order ('prathamajā ṛtasya'); and the word 'ṛta' used in this context signifies not only the order that is universally relevant and operative, but also reality that is unaltered by space and time. The first expression of this ṛta is the desire (kāma) which distinguished Prajāpati. The tortoise as the essence of the primaeval water is itself the articulation of 'desire'. Consider the continuation of the above account, where a mantra is cited in support (*Taittirīya-āraṇyaka* 1,23,9):

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तदेषाभ्यनूक्ता -

'विधाय लोकान्विधाय भूतानि
विधाय सर्वाः प्रदिशो दिशश्च ।
प्रजापतिः प्रथमजा ऋतस्य
आत्मनात्मानमभिसंविवेश ॥'

इति । सर्वमेवेदमाप्त्वा सर्वमवरुध्य तदेवानु - प्रविशति य एवं वेद ॥

The cited mantra (said to be from *Ṛgveda*, but not traceable in the present Samhitā text) explains that Prajāpati, the first-born of ṛta, constituted (viz. created) all the worlds, all the beings and all space, out of the material provided by the primordial waters, or by their essence in the form of the tortoise. And, having created all things out of himself, he himself enters into all things ('ātmanā ātmānam abhisam-viveśa'). In other words, he becomes the spirit of all the worlds, all the beings, and of all space. The universe is but an emanation or unfoldment of Prajāpati. The Āraṇyaka-passage adds that by 'entering' is meant pervasion and accommodation. He pervades over all things, in the sense that he obtains all these things ('āptvā'); and he accommodates all these things in himself so that they are all restrained by him, and nothing over-reaches him ('avaruddhya'). The created universe does not exhaust him; in fact, he transcends it and abides in his own nature. This aspect of Prajāpati is known as Purusha.

Purusha is identified with Nārāyaṇa in *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (13,6,1,1), where it is this Purusha-Nārāyaṇa who desires to transcend the created world, to pervade all things and become all things.

पुरुषो ह नारायणोऽकामयत अतितिष्ठेयँ सर्वाणि भूतान्यहमेवेदँ सर्वं स्यामिति ॥

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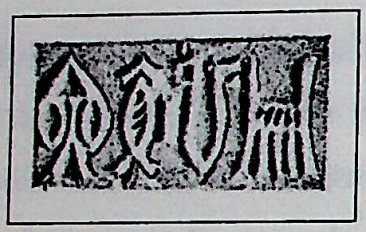
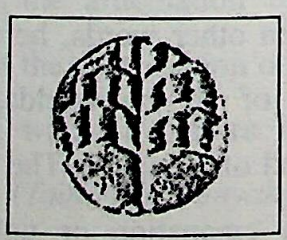


This reference is interesting in as much as the ṛshi of the Purusha-sūkta is given as Nārāyaṇa, and the devatā as Purusha. The two being one in actuality, the hymn would answer to Yāska's description of self-laudatory hymns or 'ādhyātmikya' (explained in the previous volume). The word Nārāyaṇa is explained by Manu (1,10) as indicating primaeval waters (nārā, āpah) as the resting place (ayana) in pre-creation stage for the Spirit:

आपो नारा इति प्रोक्ता आपो वै नरसूनवः ।
ता यदस्यायनं पूर्वं तेन नारायणः स्मृतः ॥

The waters are the offsprings of the very Spirit (nara) that produced them; and they are the Spirit's natural abode. The Spirit abiding in its own natural state is Purusha (puri śete, 'sleeps in the abode, filling it through and through'). The same Spirit animated by the desire to create is Prajāpati, the creator (srashṭā or srashṭeśvara) and protector (pālaka) of all beings. To become the Purusha, the condition is to be sacrificed (viz. abandoned partially). This is technically known as 'purusha-medha'. When we read in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (5,5,1) that the waters (āpah) were all that were there in the beginning, and that these waters produced Satya (the real) which is also Brahma (the growing inclination), and that Prajāpati



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came forth from this Brahma, the Brahmā is to be recognized as Purusha. The passage notes that the devas (the shining beings responsible for all creation) worship not Prajāpati, their immediate progenitor, but satya, who is Brahma. This is so because the three-lettered word 'satya' (sa+t+ya) signifies that the world of creation (which is unreal and ephemeral) represented by the middle letter ('t') sandwitched between two letters which signify immutability, and transcendental nature ('sa' and 'ya'), viz. reality. What is real is the source of all that appears, and also the ultimate destiny. Thus the real is to be resorted to by all the wise ones (viz. the devas).

आप एवेदमग्र आसुस्ता आपः सत्यमसृजन्त । सत्यं ब्रह्म । ब्रह्म प्रजापतिम् । प्रजापतिर्देवान् । ते देवाः सत्यमेवोपासते । तदेतत् त्र्यक्षरं सत्यमिति, स इत्येकमक्षरं, तित्त्येकमक्षरं, यमित्येकमक्षरम् । प्रथमोत्तमे अक्षरे सत्यं, मध्यतोऽनृतम् । तदेतदनृतमुभयतः सत्येन परिगृहीतम् ॥

The middle letter, which represents all creation, involves the sacrifice of the initial and the final letters (which indicates brahma). This is the real meaning of 'purusha-medha'. The expression 'purusha-medha' occurs in *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (13,6,1) in the sense of the five-fold sacrifice (pañcha-rātra-yajña-kratu), which was the means of transcending all creation and of becoming all. This is what the Purusha himself saw and employed:

स एतं पुरुषमेधं पञ्चरात्रं
यज्ञक्रतुमपश्यत् । तमाहरत् ।
तेनायजत । तेनेष्ट्वाऽत्यतिष्ठत्सर्वाणि
भूतानीदꣳ सर्वमभवत् ॥

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Elsewhere (12,3,4,1) in the same text, this self-sacrifice was said to have been prescribed for Purusha by Prajāpati :

पुरुषꣳ ह नारायणं प्रजापतिरुवाच -
यजस्व यजस्वेति ॥

What was required to be sacrificed (viz. given up for a purpose), in this case was the own-nature of purity, formlessness and transcendence of Purusha. Prajāpati could become the creator (srashṭā) and the lord of the created universe only as a result of Purusha's sacrifice. And the offsprings of Prajāpati, viz. the devas, also sacrificed Purusha in their turn. This theme, which becomes the thrust of Purusha-sūkta, has been pointed out in an other context in the same text (*Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* 13,6,2,1). Purusha is so called because he fills and enlivens all universe, and yet lies hidden (viz.sacrificed) in all the things and beings.

इमे वै लोकाः पूरयमेव पुरुषो योऽयं पवते सोऽस्यां पुरि शेते तस्मात्पुरुषः ॥

THE TEXT

The text of Purusha-sūkta is included in all the four Vedas, but there are some variations in the readings. The readings from each of the Vedas are given below along with the svara-markings. Also included in

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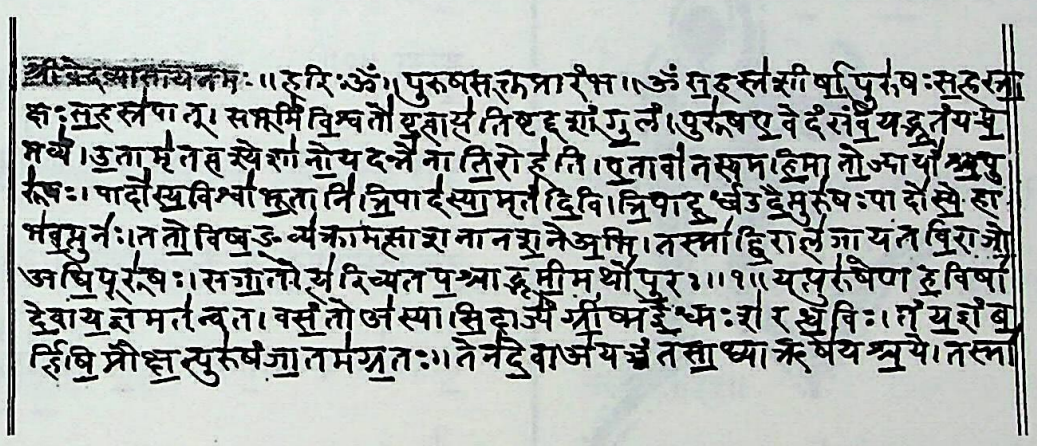
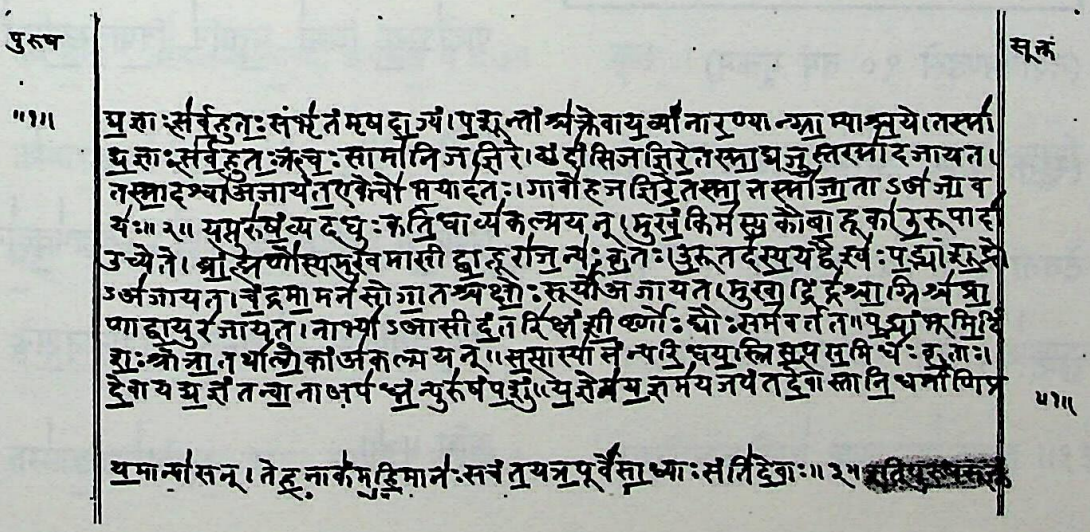
this section is the text of *Mudgalopanishat*, which claims to explain the import of Purusha-sūkta. Śaunaka's *Rgvidhāna* provides elaborate prescriptions for the employment of this hymn (viniyoga) and the benefits that one procures by such employment.





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I

TEXT IN ṚGVEDA (10, 90)

॥ ऋग्वेदीयं पौरुषं सूक्तम् ॥

(दशममण्डले ९० तमं सूक्तम्)

(सूक्तस्यास्य ऋषिर्नारायणः । पुरुषो देवता । १-१५ अनुष्टुप्, १६ त्रिष्टुप् छन्दः ।)

ॐ

सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।
स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वा ऽत्यतिष्ठद्दशाङ्गुलम् ॥१॥

पुरुष एवेदं सर्वं यद् भूतं यच्च भव्यम् ।
उतामृतस्येशानो यदन्नेनातिरोहति ॥२॥

एतावानस्य महिमा ऽतो ज्यायाꣳश्च पूरुषः ।
पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ॥३॥

त्रिपादूर्ध्व ऽउदैत्पुरुषः पादो ऽस्येहाभवत्पुनः
ततो विष्वङ् व्यक्रामत् साशनानशने ऽअभि ॥४॥

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तस्माद् विराळजायत विराजो अधि पूरुषः ।

स जातो अत्यरिच्यत पश्चाद् भूमिमथो पुरः ॥५॥१॥

यत्पुरुषेण हविषा देवा यज्ञमतन्वत ।

वसन्तो अस्यासीदाज्य० ग्रीष्म इध्मः शरद्धविः ॥६॥

तं यज्ञं बर्हिषि प्रौक्षन् पुरुषं जातमग्रतः ।

तेन देवा ऽ अयजन्त साध्या ऋषयश्च ये ॥७॥

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः संभृतं पृषदाज्यम् ।

पशूं ँ स्तांश्चक्रे वायव्यानारण्यान् ग्राम्याश्च ये ॥८॥

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे ।

छन्दांसि जज्ञिरे तस्माद्यजुस्तस्मादजायत ॥९॥

तस्मादश्वा अजायन्त ये के चोभयादतः ।

गावो ह जज्ञिरे तस्मात्तस्माज्जाता अजावयः ॥१०॥२॥

यत्पुरुषं व्यदधुः कतिधा व्यकल्पयन् ।

मुखं किमस्य कौ बाहू का ऊरू पादा उच्येते ॥११॥

ब्राह्मणो ऽ स्य मुखमासीद् बाहू राजन्यः कृतः ।

ऊरू तदस्य यद्वैश्यः पद्भ्यां शूद्रो ऽ अजायत ॥१२॥

चन्द्रमा मनसो जातश्चक्षोः सूर्यो ऽ अजायत ।

मुखादिन्द्रश्चाग्निश्च प्राणाद्वायुरजायत ॥१३॥

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नाभ्या आसीदन्तरिक्षं शीर्ष्णो द्यौः समवर्तत ।

पद्भ्यां भूमिर्दिशः श्रोत्रात्तथा लोकाँ ऽ

अकल्पयन् ॥१४॥

सप्तास्यासन् परिधयस्त्रिः सप्त समिधः कृताः ।

देवा यद्यज्ञं तन्वाना ऽ अबध्नन् पुरुषं

पशुम् ॥१५॥

यज्ञेन यज्ञमयजन्त देवास्तानि धर्माणि प्रथमा-

न्यासन् ।

ते ह नाकं महिमानः सचन्ते यत्र पूर्वे साध्याः

सन्ति देवाः ॥१६॥

इति ऋग्वेदीयँ पौरुषं सूक्तम् ॥

II

TEXT IN YAJURVEDA

॥ यजुर्वेदीयं पौरुषं सूक्तम् ॥

(वाजसनेयिसंहितायां, ३१,१)

(सहस्रशीर्षेत्यस्य नारायणऋषिः । पुरुषो देवता ।

निचृदनुष्टुप् छन्दः ।)

सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।

स भूमिं सर्वतस्पृत्वा ऽत्यतिष्ठद्दशा-

ङ्गुलम् ॥१॥

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(पुरुष इत्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। ईशानो देवता । निचृदनुष्टुप् छन्दः।)

पुरुष एवेद ँ सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भाव्यम् ।
उतामृतत्वस्येशानो यदन्नेनातिरोहति ॥२॥

(एतावानित्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। पुरुषो देवता । निचृदनुष्टुप् छन्दः ।)

एतावानस्य महिमातो ज्यायाश्च पूरुषः ।
पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ॥३॥

(त्रिपादित्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः । पुरुषो देवता । अनुष्टुप् छन्दः ।)

त्रिपादूर्ध्व उदैत्पुरुषः पादो ऽ स्येहाभवत्पुनः ।
ततो विष्वङ् व्यक्रामत्साशनानशने ऽ अभि ॥४॥

(ततो विराडित्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः । स्रष्टा देवता अनुष्टुप् छन्दः ।)

ततो विराडजायत विराजो ऽ अधि पूरुषः ।
स जातो ऽ अत्यरिच्यत पश्चाद् भूमिमथो पुरः ॥५॥

(तस्मादित्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। पुरुषो देवता । विराडनुष्टुप् छन्दः ।)

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः सम्भृतं पृषदाज्यम् ।
पशूँस्ताँश्चक्रे वायव्यानारण्या ग्राम्याश्च ये ॥६॥

(तस्मादित्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। स्रष्टेश्वरो देवता । अनुष्टुप् छन्दः ।)

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुत ऽ ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे ।
छन्दाँसि जज्ञिरे तस्माद्यजुस्तस्मादजायत ॥७॥

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(तस्मादित्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। पुरुषो देवता।

निचृदनुष्टुप् छन्दः।)

तस्मादश्वा ऽ अजायन्त ये के चोभयादतः।

गावो जज्ञिरे तस्मात्तस्माज्जाता ऽ

अजावयः ॥८॥

'(तं यज्ञमित्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। पुरुषो देवता।

निचृदनुष्टुप् छन्दः।)

तं यज्ञं बर्हिषि प्रोक्षन् पुरुषं जातमग्रतः।

तेन देवाऽ अयजन्त साध्या ऽ ऋषयश्च ये ॥९॥

(यत्पुरुषमित्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। पुरुषो देवता।

निचृदनुष्टुप् छन्दः।)

यत्पुरुषं व्यदधुः कतिधा व्यकल्पयन्।

मुखं किमस्यासीत्किं बाहू किमूरू पादा ऽ

उच्यते ॥१०॥

(ब्राह्मण इत्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। पुरुषो देवता।

निचृदनुष्टुप् छन्दः।)

ब्राह्मणो ऽ स्य मुखमासीद् बाहू राजन्यः

कृतः।

ऊरू तदस्य यद्वैश्यः पद्भ्या ँ शूद्रो ऽ

अजायत ॥११॥

(चन्द्रमा इत्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। पुरुषो देवता।

अनुष्टुप् छन्दः।)

चन्द्रमा मनसो जातश्चक्षोः सूर्यो अजायत।

श्रोत्राद्वायुश्च प्राणश्च मुखादग्निरजायत ॥१२॥

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(नाभ्या इत्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। पुरुषो देवता। अनुष्टुप् छन्दः।)

नाभ्या ऽआसीदन्तरिक्षꣳशीर्ष्णो द्यौः समवर्तत।
पद्भ्यां भूमिर्दिशः श्रोत्रात्तथा लोकाꣳ २ऽ
अकल्पयन् ॥१३॥

(यत्पुरुषेणेत्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। पुरुषो देवता। निचृदनुष्टुप् छन्दः।)

यत्पुरुषेण हविषा देवा यज्ञमतन्वत।
वसन्तो ऽ स्यासीदाज्यं ग्रीष्म ऽ इध्मः
शरद्धविः ॥१४॥

(सप्तास्येत्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। पुरुषो देवता। अनुष्टुप् छन्दः।)

सप्तास्यासन् परिधयस्त्रिः सप्त समिधः कृताः।
देवा यद्यज्ञं तन्वाना ऽ अबध्नन् पुरुषं
पशुम् ॥१५॥

(यज्ञेनेत्यस्य नारायण ऋषिः। पुरुषो देवता। विराट् त्रिष्टुप् छन्दः)

यज्ञेन यज्ञमयजन्त देवास्तानि धर्माणि
प्रथमान्यासन्।
ते ह नाकं महिमानः सचन्ते यत्र पूर्वे साध्याः
सन्ति देवाः ॥१६॥

(अद्भ्य इत्यस्योत्तरनारायण ऋषिः। अदित्यो देवता। भुरिक् त्रिष्टुप् छन्दः)

अद्भ्यः सम्भृतः पृथिव्यै रसाच्च विश्वकर्मणः
समवर्तताग्रे।

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तस्य त्वष्टा विदधद्रूपमेति तन्मर्त्यस्य देवत्वमा-
जानमग्रे ॥१७॥

(वेदाहमित्यस्योत्तरनारायण ऋषिः । आदित्यो देवता ।
निचृत् त्रिष्टुप् छन्दः ।)

वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तमादित्यवर्णं तमसः
परस्तात् ।
तमेवं विदित्वाति मृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यते
ऽयनाय ॥१८॥

(प्रजापतिरित्यस्योत्तरनारायण ऋषिः । आदित्यो
देवता । भुरिक् त्रिष्टुप् छन्दः ।)

प्रजापतिश्चरति गर्भे ऽअन्तरजायमानो बहुधा
वि जायते ।
तस्य योनिं परि पश्यन्ति धीरास्तस्मिन् ह
तस्थुर्भुवनानि विश्वा ॥१९॥

(यो देवेभ्य इत्यस्योत्तरनारायण ऋषिः । विश्वेदेवा
देवताः । अनुष्टुप् छन्दः।)

यो देवेभ्य ऽआ तपति यो देवानां पुरोहितः ।
पूर्वो यो देवेभ्यो जातो नमो रुचाय
ब्राह्मये ॥२०॥

(रुचमित्यस्योत्तरनारायण ऋषिः । विश्वेदेवा देवताः।
अनुष्टुप् छन्दः ।)

रुचं ब्राह्मं जनयन्तो देवा ऽअग्रे तदब्रुवन् ।
यस्त्वैवं ब्राह्मणो विद्यात्तस्य देवा ऽ
आसन्वशे ॥२१॥

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(श्रीश्च त इत्येतस्योत्तरनारायण ऋषिः । आदित्यो देवता । निचृदार्षीत्रिष्टुप् छन्दः ।)

श्रीश्च॑ ते ल॒क्ष्मीश्च॒ पत्न्या॑वहोरा॒त्रे पा॒र्श्वे

नक्ष॑त्राणि रू॒पम॒श्विनौ॒ व्यात्त॑म् ।

इ॒ष्णन्नि॑षाणा॒मुं म॑ ऽ इषाण

सर्व लो॒कं म॑ ऽ इषाण ॥२२॥

III

TEXT IN SĀMAVEDA

There are two versions of purusha-sūkta in Sāma-Veda. The first one consists of six ṛks, the first five being a part of the Sūkta proper, and the sixth another ṛk from uttarārchika (1,12,1). The second version has only the five mantras from Ṛgvedīya Purusha-sukta (Pūrvārchika, 4th daśati, 3-7). Nārāyaṇa is the ṛshi and Purusha is the devatā for the first four mantras, Srashṭā or Creator being the devatā for the sixth. They are all in anushṭup Chhandas.

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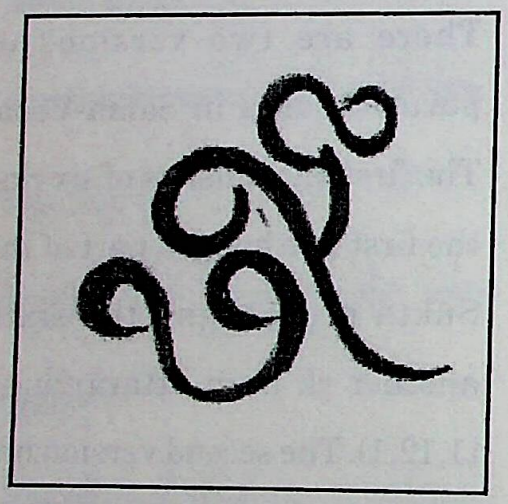
TEXT IN SMĀVEDA

॥ सामवेदीयं पौरुषं सूक्तम् ॥



(१)

(षड्ऋचात्मकः पुरुषसूक्तः)

३२ १ ३१२ ३२ ३१ २
ॐ सहस्र शीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।

१ र २ र ३ २३ १२ ३ २
स भूमि ꣳ सर्वतो वृत्वात्यतिष्ठ द्दशाङ्गुलम् ॥१॥

३२३२ ३ १२३१ २ ३ १२३१ २
त्रिपादूर्ध्व उदैत्पुरुषः पादोस्येहाभवत्पुनः ।

२ ३ २३ क २र ३२ ३ २
तथा विष्वङ् व्यक्रामदशनानशाने अभि ॥२॥

१२३ २उ ३ २३ २३३ १२
पुरुष एवेद ꣳ सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यम् ।

१ २ ३ १ २३१ २ ३ १ ३ १२ ३२
पादोस्य सर्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्या ऽ मृतं दिवि ॥३॥

१ २ ३ २उ ३ १ २ ३१२
एतावानस्य महिमा ततो ज्यायाश्च पूरुषः ।

३ १ २ ३१ २र १र २र३१२१२
उतामृत त्वस्येशानो यदन्नेनातिरोहति ॥४॥

३ १२ ३ २ १२३ १ २
ततो विराडजायत विराजो अधि पूरुषः ।

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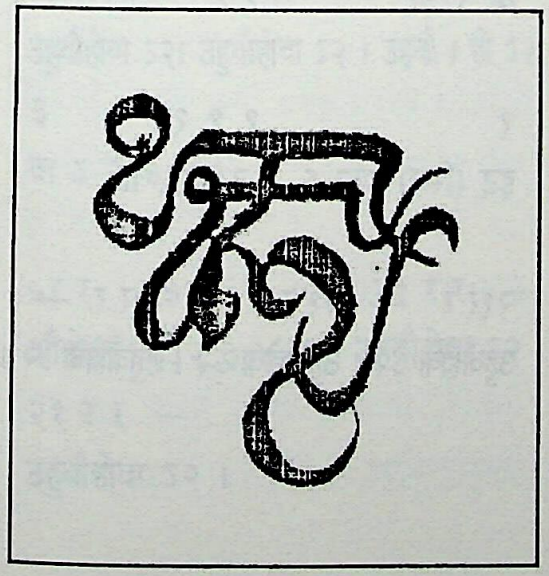
२ ३ १र २र ३ २ र ३१ ३ २३
स जातो अत्यरिच्यत पश्चाद्भूमिमथो पुरः ॥५॥

(सामवेदे उत्तरार्चिकस्य प्रथमप्रपाठके द्वादशसूक्ते प्रथममन्त्रः)

१ २३ १२ २३२३१२३ १२
कयानश्चित्र आ भुवदूतीसदावृधः सखा ।

२ ३१ २१ २
कयाश चिष्ठयावृता ॥६॥

॥ इति षड्चात्मकः पुरुषसूक्तः ॥



(२)

(ऋक्पञ्चकः पुरुषसूक्तः)

३१२३ १२ ३२ ३१२
सहस्रशीर्षाः पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।

१ २र ३१२ ३ १ २ ३ २
स भूमिं सर्वतो वृत्त्वा त्यतिष्ठद्दशाङ्गुलम् ॥१॥(३)॥

३२३२उ ३१२२३१ २ ३ १२३१२
त्रिपादूर्ध्व उदैतत्पुरुषः पादो ऽ स्येहाभवत्पुनः ।

२३ २ ३क २र ३२ ३२
तथा विष्वङ् व्यक्रामदशनानशने अभि ॥२॥(४)॥

१२३ २उ ३ २३२र ३ १ २
पुरुष एवेदं सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भाव्यम् ।

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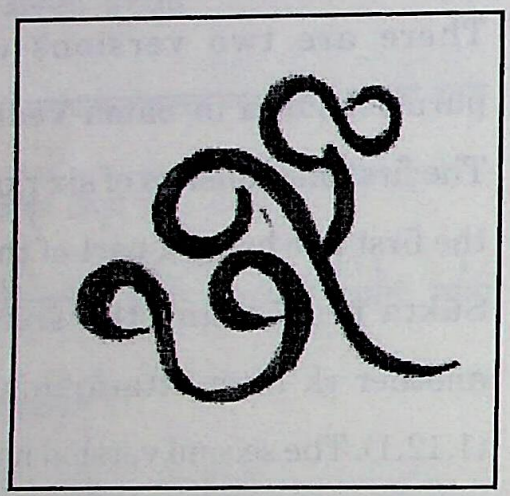
TEXT IN SMĀVEDA

॥ सामवेदीयं पौरुषं सूक्तम् ॥



(१)

(षड्ऋचात्मकः पुरुषसूक्तः)

३२ १ ३१२ ३२ ३१ २
ॐ सहस्र शीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।

१ र २ र ३ २३ १२ ३ २
स भूमि ꣳ सर्वतो वृत्वात्यतिष्ठ द्दशाङ्गुलम् ॥१॥

३२३२ ३ १२३१ २ ३ १२३१ २
त्रिपादूर्ध्व उदैत्पुरुषः पादोस्येहाभवत्पुनः ।

२ ३ २३ क २र ३२ ३ २
तथा विष्वङ् व्यक्रामदशनानशाने अभि ॥२॥

१२३ २उ ३ २३ २३३ १२
पुरुष एवेद ꣳ सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यम् ।

१ २ ३ १ २३१ २ ३ १ ३ १२ ३२
पादोस्य सर्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्या ऽ मृतं दिवि ॥३॥

१ २ ३ २उ ३ १ २ ३१२
एतावानस्य महिमा ततो ज्यायाश्च पूरुषः ।

३ १ २ ३१ २र १र २र३१२१२
उतामृत त्वस्येशानो यदन्नेनातिरोहति ॥४॥

३ १२ ३ २ १२३ १ २
ततो विराडजायत विराजो अधि पूरुषः ।

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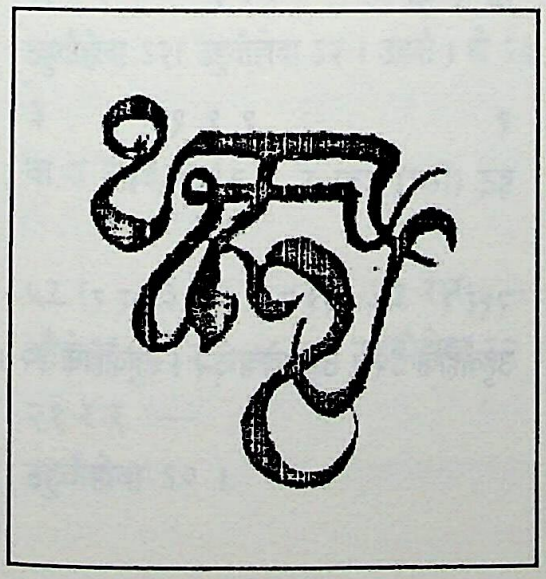
२ ३ १र २र ३ २ र ३१ ३ २३
स जातो अत्यरिच्यत पश्चाद्भूमिमथो पुरः ॥५॥

(सामवेदे उत्तरार्चिकस्य प्रथमप्रपाठके द्वादशसूक्ते प्रथममन्त्रः)

१ २३ १२ २३२३१२३ १२
कयार्नश्चित्र आ भुवदूतीसदावृधः सखा ।

२ ३१ २१ २
कयाश चिष्ठयावृता ॥६॥

॥ इति षड्ऋचात्मकः पुरुषसूक्तः ॥



(२)

(ऋक्पञ्चकः पुरुषसूक्तः)

३१२३ १२ ३२ ३१२
सहस्रशीर्षाः पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।

१ २र ३१२ ३ १ २ ३ २
स भूमिं सर्वतो वृत्त्वा त्यतिष्ठद्दशाङ्गुलम्
॥१॥(३)॥

३२३२उ ३१२२३१ २ ३ १२३१२
त्रिपादूर्ध्व उदैतत्पुरुषः पादो ऽस्येहाभवत्पुनः ।

२३ २ ३क २र ३२ ३२
तथा विष्वङ् व्यक्रामदशनानशने अभि
॥२॥(४)॥

१२३ २उ ३ २३२र ३ १ २
पुरुष एवेदं सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भाव्यम् ।

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१२ ३ १२ ३१२ ३१२ ३१२ ३२
पादो ऽ स्य सर्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि
॥३॥(५)॥

१२ ३२उ ३ १२ ३ १२
तावानस्य महिमा ततो ज्यायांश्च पूरुषः ।

३१२३ १ २र३ २र ३ १२
उतामृत त्वस्येशानो यदन्नेनातिरोहति
॥४॥(६)॥

१२ ३१२ ३२ ३ २३ १२
ततो विराडजायत विराजो अधि पूरुषः।

२ ३ १ २र ३२उ ३१२ ३२
स जातो अत्यरिच्यत पश्चाद्भूमिमथो पुरः
॥५॥(७)॥

॥ पुरुषसूक्तसाम ॥

२१ २ २१ २ २१ २
उहु वा हाउ । उहुवाहाउ । उहुवाहाउ ।

२१ रं रं २ २ रं १ २१
सहस्रशीर्षाः पुरू २,३, षाः । सहस्राक्षः सहस्रा ऽ
२
२,३, पात् ।

१ रं २१र २ १ २ १रं
स भूमिग्ं सर्वतो वा २,३,त्वा । अत्यतिष्ठद्दशांगू
२
ऽ २,३, लाम् ॥

२ १ २ २१ २ २१ २
उ हु वा हाउ । उहुवाहाउ । उहुवा ऽ ३ हा उ ।
वा ऽ ३।

१ १ १ १
इट् (स्थि) इडा ऽ २,३,४,५ ॥

२१रं रं — २१ र र — २१र र —
उहुवौहोवा ऽ२ । उहुवौहोवा ऽ२ । उहुवौहोवा ऽ२ ।

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१र र २ १रर रर
त्रिपादूर्ध्व उदैत्पुरू ऽ २, ३, षाः ॥ पादो ऽ स्येहा
२१र २
भवत्पु ऽ २,४, नाः ।

१र २१ २ २र
१२
तथाविष्वङ् वियक्रा ऽ२,३ मात् ॥
ऊ ा श ा न ा ा न ा श ा न ा
२
आ ऽ२,३,भी ।

१ र र — १ र र — १ र १
उहुवौहोवा ऽ२। उहुवौहोवा ऽ२ । उहवौ । हो ऽ२
३
वा ऽ २,३,४ ।

५र र ३ ५ २१ र र —
औहोवा । ईऽ२,३,४ डा । उहवौहोवा ऽ२ ।
२१ र र —
उहुवौहोवा ऽ२ ।

२१ १ ३ ५र र
उहुवौ । होऽ२ । वा ऽ२,३,४ । औहोवा ।
३ ५
सू ऽ२,३,४ वाः ॥

२१ र र — २१ र र — १ र १
उहुवौहोवा ऽ२। उहुवौहोवा ऽ२ । उहुवौ । हो ऽ२ ।
३
वा ऽ २,३,४ ।

५र र ३ १ १ १
औहोवा । ऊ ऽ २,३,४,५ ॥

१र र — १र र — १र र —
इयौहोवा ऽ२ । इयौहोवा ऽ२ । इयौहोवा ऽ२ ।

१ र र २ १ २ २
पुरुष एवेद ँ साऽ२,३र्वाम् ॥ यद्भूतं यच्च
१र २
भावा ऽ२,३ याम् ॥

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१र र र र २ १र र १
पादोस्य सर्वा भूता ऽ२३ नी ॥ त्रिपादस्यामृतं दा
२
ऽ२,३ वी ।

१र र — १ र र — १र र —
इयौ होवा ऽ२ । इयौ होवा ऽ२ । इयौ । हो ऽ२ ।
३
वा ऽ २,३,४ ॥

५र र ३ ५ १ र र — १र
औहोवा । ई ऽ२,३,४ डा । इयौ होवा ऽ२ । इयौ
र —
होवा ऽ२।

१र ३ ५र र ३
इयौ । होऽ२ । वा ऽ २,३,४ । जौ होवा । ज्यो
५
ऽ २,३,४ तीः ।

१र र — १र र —
इयौ होवा ऽ२। इयौ होवा ऽ२ । इयौ । हो ऽ२।
३
वा ऽ २,३,४।

५र र ३
औहोवा ॥ ई ऽ २,३,४,५ ॥

२र २र २र १र र २ १ २
हाउ हाउ हाउ । तावानस्य । महा ऽ २,३ इमा ऽ२॥

२र २र २र
हाउ हाउ हाउ ।

१र र र २ १र २
ततो ज्यायाꣳश्च पूरु ऽ २,३, षा ऽ३ः ॥
२र २र २र
हाउ हाउ हाउ ॥

२१र र २ ७ऽ ७ऽ ७ऽ
उतामृतत्वस्येशा ऽ२,३ना ऽ३ः ॥ हाउ हाउ हाउ ।

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१ र र२१र २
यदन्नेनातिरो ऽ २,३ हऽ ती ऽ३।

७ऽ ७ऽ ७ऽ २ १
हाउ हाउ हाउ। वा ऽ ३ ॥ इट् (स्थि) इडाऽ
१ १ १
२,३,४,५ ॥

७ऽ ७ऽ ७ऽ १र २ १र २र
हाउ हाउ हाउवा। ततो विराडजायत।
७ऽ ७ऽ ७ऽ
हाउ हाउ हाउवा।

२१र२र १२१र २ ७ऽ ७ऽ ७ऽ
विराजो अधिपूरुषः ॥ हाउ हाउ हाउवा ॥
१ २र१र २
स जातो अत्यरिच्यत ॥

७ऽ ७ऽ ७ऽ २१र र २१र २१
हाउ हाउ हाउवा। पश्चाद्भूमिमथो पुरः।

७ऽ ऽ ऽ
हाउ हाउ हाउवा ऽ ३ ॥

३ १ १ १
ई २,३,४,५ ॥

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IV

TEXT IN ATHARVAVEDA

॥ अथर्ववेदीयं पौरुषं सूक्तम् ॥

सहस्रबाहुः पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।
स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वा ऽ त्यतिष्ठद्दशाङ्गुलम् ॥१॥

त्रिभिः पद्भिर्द्यामारोहत् पादो ऽ स्येहाभवत्पुनः ।
तथा व्यक्रामद्विष्वङ् ङशनानशने ऽ अनु ॥२॥

तावन्तो अस्य महिमानस्ततो ज्यायांश्च पूरुषः ।
पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ॥३॥

पुरुष एवेदं सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यम् ।
उतामृतत्त्वस्येश्वरो यदन्येनाभवत्सह ॥४॥

यत्पुरुषं व्यदधुः कतिधा व्यकल्पयन् ।
मुखं किमस्य किं बाहू किमूरू पादा उच्येते ॥५॥

ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीद्बाहू राजन्यो ऽ भवत् ।

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मध्यं तदस्य यद्वैश्यः पद्भ्यां शूद्रो अजायत ॥६॥

चन्द्रमा मनसो जातश्चक्षोः सूर्यो अजायत ।
मुखादिन्द्रश्चाग्निश्च प्राणाद्वायुरजायत ॥७॥

नाभ्या आसीदन्तरिक्षं शीर्ष्णो द्यौः समवर्तत ।
पद्भ्यां भूमिर्दिशः श्रोत्रात्तथा लोका ँ अकल्पयन् ॥८॥

विराडग्रे समभवद्विराजो अधि पूरुषः ।
स जातो अत्यरिच्यत पश्चाद् भूमिमथो पुरः ॥९॥

यत्पुरुषेण हविषा देवा यज्ञमतन्वत ।
वसन्तो अस्यासीदाज्यं ग्रीष्म इध्मः शरद्धविः ॥१०॥

तं यज्ञं प्रावृषा प्रौक्षन् पुरुषं जातमग्रतः ।
तेन देवा अयजन्त साध्या वसवश्च ये ॥११॥

तस्मादश्वा अजायन्त ये च के चोभयादतः ।
गावो ह जज्ञिरे तस्मात्तस्माज्जाता अजावयः ॥१२॥

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे ।
छन्दांसि जज्ञिरे तस्माद्यजुस्तस्मा-दजायत ॥१३॥

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः सम्भृतं पृषदाज्यम् ।
पशूंस्ता ँ श्चक्रे वायव्यानारण्यान् ग्राम्याश्च ये ॥१४॥

सप्तास्यासन् परिधयस्त्रिः सप्त समिधः कृताः ।

गर्गवंश्रीगर्गवंश्रीगर्गवंश्रीग

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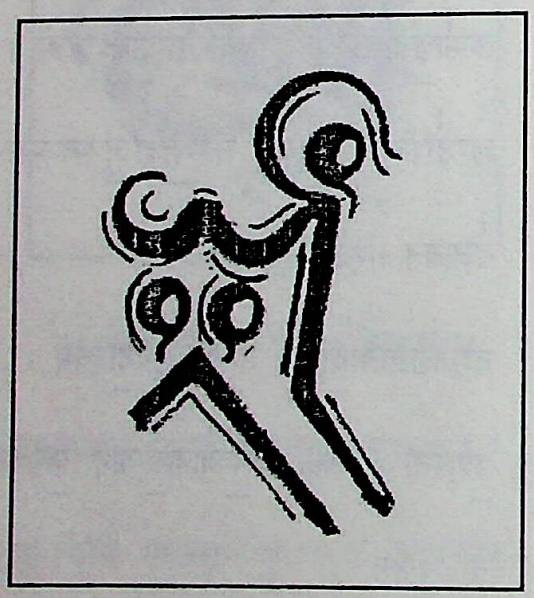
दे॒वा यद्य॒ज्ञं त॑न्वा॒ना अब॑ध्न॒न् पुरुषं

प॒शुम् ॥१५॥

मूर्ध्नो॒ देवस्य॑ बृह॒तो अं॒शवः सग्र॒ सप्ततीः ।

राज्ञः॒ सोम॑स्याजायन्त जा॒तस्य॒ पुरुषा॑द॒धि ॥१६॥

॥इत्यथर्ववेदीयं पौरुषं सूक्तम् ॥



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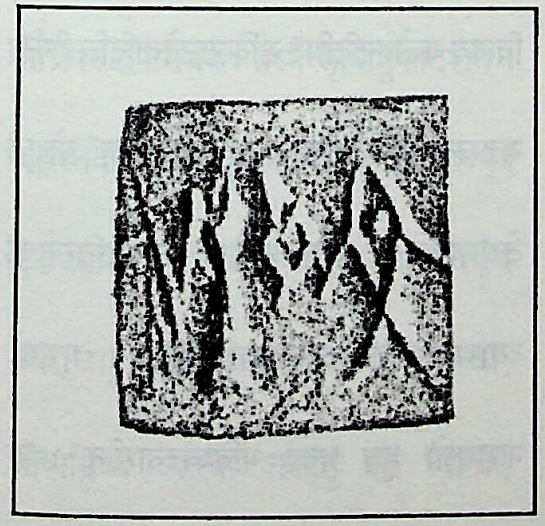
॥ मुद्गलोपनिषत् ॥

Mudgalopanishat seeks to unravel the hidden import of Purusha-sūkta, on the basis of *Purusha-sāmhitā* (which can no longer be identified). The explanation involves the glory and majesty of the four Vyūha forms of Vishṇu : Vāsudeva, Samkarshaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. The text interprets creation as a ritual as well as liberation from worldly fetters.



श्रीमत्पुरूषसूक्तार्थं पूर्णानन्दकलेबरम् ।

पुरूषोत्तमविख्यातं पूर्णं ब्रह्म भावयाम्यहम् ॥

(ॐ वाङ्मे मनसीति शान्तिः।)

(१)

ॐ पुरुषसूक्तार्थनिर्णयं व्याख्यास्यामः ॥

पुरुषसंहितायां पुरूषसूक्तार्थः संग्रहेण प्रोच्यते ॥

सहस्रशीर्षेत्यस्य स शब्दोऽनन्तवाचकः ।

अनन्तयोजनं प्राह दशाङ्गुलवचस्तथा ॥१॥

तस्य प्रथमया विष्णोर्देशतो व्याड्डिरिता ।

द्वितीयया चास्य विष्णोः कालतो व्यड्डिरुच्यते ॥२॥

विष्णोर्मोक्षप्रदत्वं च कथितं तु तृतीयया ।

एतावनिति मन्त्रेण वैभवं कथितं हरेः ॥३॥

एतेनैव च मन्त्रेण चतुर्व्यूहो विभाषितः ।

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त्रिपादित्यनया प्रोक्तमनिरूद्धस्य वैभवम् ॥४॥

तस्माद्विराडित्यनया पादनारायणाद्धरेः ।

प्रकृतेः पुरुषस्यापि समुत्पत्तिः प्रदर्शिता ॥५॥

यत्पुरुषेणेत्यनया सृष्टियज्ञः समीरितः ।

सप्तास्यासन् परिधयः सप्तिधश्च समीरिताः ॥६॥

तं यज्ञमिति मन्त्रेण सृष्टियज्ञः समीरितः ।

अनेनैव च मन्त्रेण मोक्षश्च समुदीरितः ॥७॥

तस्मादिति च मन्त्रेण जगत्सृष्टिः समीरिता ।

वेदाहमिति मन्त्राभ्यां वैभवं कथितं हरेः ॥८॥

यज्ञेनेत्युपसंहारः सृष्टेर्मोक्षस्य चेरितः ।

य एवमेतज्जानाति स हि मुक्तो भवेदिति ॥९॥

(२)

अथ तथा मुद्गलोपनिषदि पुरूषसूक्तस्य वैभवं विस्तारेण प्रतिपादितम् ।

वासुदेव इन्द्राय भगवज्ज्ञानमुपदिश्य पुनरपि सूक्ष्मश्रवणाय प्रणतायेन्द्राय परमरहस्यभूतं पुरूषसूक्ताभ्यां खण्डद्वयाभ्यामुपादिशत् ॥

द्वो खण्डौ उच्येते । योऽयमुक्तः स पुरूषो नामरूपज्ञानागोचरः संसरिणामतिदुर्ज्ञेयं विषयं विहाय कलेशादिभिः संक्लिष्टदेवादिजिहीर्षया सहस्रकलावयवकल्याणं दृष्टमात्रेण मोक्षदं वेषमाददे । तेन वेषेण भूम्यादिलोकं व्याप्यानन्तयोजनमत्यतिष्ठत् । पुरुषो नारायणो भूतं भव्यं भविष्यच्चासीत् । स

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एव सर्वेषां मोक्षदश्चासित् । स च सर्वस्मान्महिम्नो ज्यायान् । तस्मान्न कोऽपि ज्यायान् ॥ महापुरुष आत्मानं चतुर्धा कृत्वा त्रिपादेन परमे व्योम्नि चासीत् । इतरेण चतुर्थेन अनिरुद्धनारायणेन विश्वान्यासन् । स च पादनारायणो जगत्स्रष्टुं प्रकृतिमजनयत् । स समृद्धकायः सन् सृष्टिकर्म न जज्ञिवान् ।

सोऽनिरुद्धनारायणः तस्मै सृष्टिमुपादिशत् । ब्रह्मंस्तवेन्द्रियाणि याजकानि ध्यात्वा कोशभूतं दृढं त्वस्थिकिलेवरं हविर्ध्यात्वा, मां हविर्भुजं ध्यात्वा, वसन्तकालमाज्यं ध्यात्वा, ग्रीष्ममिध्मं ध्यात्वा शरदृतुं रसं ध्वात्वा, एवमग्नौ हुत्वा, अङ्गस्पर्शात् कलेवरं वज्रं हीष्यते ।

ततः स्वकार्यान् सर्वप्राणिजीवान् सृष्ट्वा पश्वाद्याः प्रादुर्भविष्यन्ति । ततः स्थावरजङ्गमात्मकं जगद् भविष्यति ॥

(एतेन जीवात्मनोर्योगेन मोक्षप्रकारश्च कथित इन्यनुसन्धेयम्)

य इमं सृष्टियज्ञं जानाति मोक्षप्रकारं च सर्वमायुरेति ॥

(३)

एको देवो बहुधा निविष्ट अजायमानो बहुधा विजायते । तमेतमग्निरित्यध्वर्यव उपासते । यजुरित्येष हीदं सर्वं युनक्ति । सामेति छन्दोगाः ।

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एतस्मिन्हीदं सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् । विषमिति सर्पाः । सर्प इति सर्पविदः । ऊर्गिति देवाः । रयिरिति मनुष्याः । मायेत्यसुराः । स्वधेति पितरः । देवजन इति देवजनविदः । रूपमिति गन्धर्वाः । गन्धर्व इत्यप्सरसः । तं यथा यथोपासते तथैव भवति ॥

तस्माद् ब्राह्मणः पुरुषरूपं परं ब्रह्मैवाहमिति भावयेत् । तद्रूपो भवति । य एवं वेद ॥

(४)

तद्ब्रह्म तापत्रयातीतं षट्कोशविनिर्मुक्तं षड्ऊर्मिवर्जितं पञ्चकोशातीतं षड्भावविकारशून्यं एवमादिसर्वविलक्षणं भवति । (तापत्रयं तु अध्यात्मिकाधिभौतिकाधिदैविकं कर्तृकर्म-कार्यज्ञातृज्ञानज्ञेय-भोक्तृभोगभोग्यमिति त्रिविधम् । त्वङ्मांसशोणितास्थिस्नायुमज्जाः षट्कोशाः । कामक्रोधलोभमोहमदमात्सर्यं इत्यरिषड्वर्गः । अन्नमयप्राणमयमनोमयविज्ञनमयानन्दमया इति पञ्च कोशाः । प्रियात्मजननवर्धनपरिणाम-क्षयनाशाः षड्भावाः । अशानायापिपासशोक-मोहजरामरणानीति षड्ऊर्मयः । कुलगोत्रजाति-वर्णाश्रमरूपाणि षड् भ्रमाः ॥)

एतद्योगेन परपुरुषो जीवो भवति नान्यः ॥

य एतदुपनिषदं नित्यमधीते सोऽग्निपूतो भवति । स वायुपूतो भवति । स आदित्यपूतो भवति ॥

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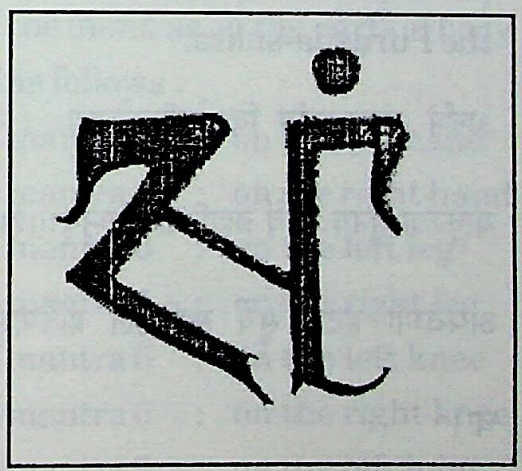
(५)

तस्मादेतत् पुरूषसूक्तार्थमतिरहस्यं राजगुह्यं देवगुह्यं गुह्यादपि गुह्यतरं नादीक्षितायोपदिशेत्। नानूचानाय नायज्ञशीलाय नावैष्णवाय नायोगिने न बहुभाषिणे नाप्रियवादिने नासंवत्सरवेदिने नातुष्टाय नानधीतवेदायोपदिशेत्। गुरुरप्येवं विच्छुचौ देशे पुण्यनक्षत्रे प्राणानायम्य पुरुषं ध्यायन् उपसन्नाय शिष्याय दक्षिणकर्णे पुरुषसूक्तार्थमुपदिशेद्विद्वान्। न बहुशो वदेत्। यातयामो भवति। असकृत्कर्णमुपदिशेत्। एतत् कुर्वाणोऽध्येताऽध्यापकश्च इह जन्मनि पुरुषो भवतीत्युपनिषत्॥

॥ इति मुद्गलोपनिषत् समाप्ता ॥

VI

Excerpts from Śaunaka's *Ṛgvidhāna* relating to the viniyoga of Purusha-sūkta. The entire text of Śaunaka has been given separately. Here, the relevant verses are presented in a revised order to facilitate meaningful study.



(1)

Vishṇu is worshipped in any of the six bases : water, fire, ones own heart, the solar orb, a

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sacred pedestal, or an icon. The ritualists worship Vishṇu in the fire, the wise ones in the solar orb, the yogis in their own heart, and the persons with limited understanding in an icon. Water, however, is always the abode of Vishṇu ; and worship therein is conducted by offering flowers to it to the accompaniment of a recital of the Purusha-sūkta.

अर्चनं संप्रवक्ष्यामि विष्णोरमिततेजसः ।

यत्कृत्वा मुनयः सर्वे ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमाप्नुयुः॥१॥

अप्स्वग्नौ हृदये सूर्ये स्थण्डिले प्रतिमासु च ।

षट्स्वेतेषु हरेः सम्यगर्चनं मुनिभिः स्मृतम् ॥२॥

अग्नौ क्रियावतां देवो दिवि देवा मनीषिणाम् ।

प्रतिमास्वल्पबुद्धीनां योगिनां हृदये हरिः ॥३॥

आपो ह्यायतनं तस्य तस्मात्तासु सदा हरिः ।

तस्य सर्वगतत्वाच्च स्थण्डिलेभविता-त्मनाम् ॥४॥

दद्यात्पुरूषरसूक्तेन यः पुष्पाण्यप एव वा ।

अर्चितं स्याज्जगदिदं तेन सर्वं चराचरम् ॥५॥

(2)

The hymn is employed in worship-rituals, involving fire-worship, repeated and holy utterance and devotional laudations:

अनुष्टुभस्य सूक्तस्य त्रिष्टुबन्तस्य देवता ।

पुरुषो वै जगद्बीजमृषिर्नारायणः स्मृतः ॥१॥

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नारायण महाबाहो श्रुणुष्वैकमनाः प्रभो ।
वक्ष्ये पुरुषसूक्तस्य विधानं त्वर्चनं प्रति ।
अग्निकार्यं जपविधिं स्तोत्रं चैव सदात्मकम् ॥२॥

(3)

The sacramental placement (nyāsa) of the sixteen ṛks of the hymn on different parts of the body after a ritual bath is given:

स्नात्वा यथोक्तविधिना प्राङ्मुखः शुद्धमानसः ।
प्रथमां विन्यसेद्वामे द्वितीयाँ दक्षिणे करे ॥१॥
तृतीयां वामपादे तु चतुर्थीं दक्षिणे न्यसेत् ।
पञ्चमीं वामजानुनि षष्ठीं वै दक्षिणे न्यसेत् ॥२॥
सप्तमीं वामकट्यां तु अष्टमीं दक्षिणे कटौ ।
नवमीं नाभिमध्ये तु दशमीं हृदये न्यसेत् ॥३॥
एकादशीं कर्णदेशे द्वादशीं वामबाहुके ।
त्रयोदशीं दक्षिणे बाहावास्ये चैव चतुर्दशीम् ॥४॥
अक्ष्णोः पञ्चदशी चैव षोडशीं मूर्ध्नि विन्यसेत् ।
एवं न्यासविधिं कृत्वा पश्चात्पूजां समारभेत् ॥५॥

The devotee sits facing east, and with purity of thoughts, places the mantras on the parts of body as follows :

mantra 1 : on the left hand
mantra 2 : on the right hand
mantra 3 : on the left leg
mantra 4 : on the right leg
mantra 5 : on the left knee
mantra 6 : on the right knee
mantra 7 : on the left loins
mantra 8 : on the right loins
mantra 9 : on the navel
mantra 10 : on the heart
mantra 11 : on the throat

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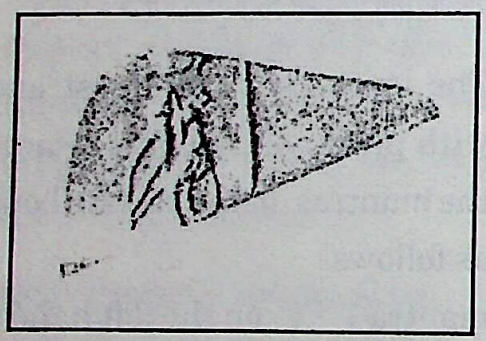
mantra 12 : on the left arm
mantra 13 : on the right arm
mantra 14 : on the mouth
mantra 15 : on the eyes
mantra 16 : on the head.

It is only after this placement-ritual that one becomes eligible to undertake regular worship



(4)

The different sequences customarily counted as sixteen (shoḍaśopachāra) in the actual worship-ritual require the recitation of appropriate mantra from this sūkta:

आद्यायाऽवाहयेद्देवमृचया तु पुरुषोत्तमम् ।

द्वितीययाऽसनं दद्यात्पाद्यं चैव तृतीयया ॥१॥

आर्घ्यं चतुर्थ्या दातव्यं पञ्चम्याऽचमनीयकम् ।

षष्ट्या स्नानं प्रकुर्वीत सप्तम्या वस्त्रमेव च ॥२॥

यज्ञोपवीतमष्टम्या नवम्या चानुलेपनम् ।

पुष्पं दशम्या दातव्यमेकादश्या तु धूपकम् ॥३॥

द्वादश्या दीपकं दद्यात् त्रयोदश्या निवेदनम् ।

चतुर्दश्या नमस्कारं पञ्चदश्या प्रदक्षिणम् ॥४॥

स्नाने वस्त्रे च नैवेद्ये दद्यादाचमनीयकम् ।

दक्षिणां तु यथा-कत्य षोडश्या तु प्रदापयेत् ॥५॥

1st mantra for āvāhanā *(invitation for receiving worship)*

2nd mantra for āsana *(offering of ceremonial seat)*

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3rd mantra for pādya
(water for the feet)
4th mantra for arghya
(water offering)
5th mantra for āchamanīya
(water for sipping)
6th mantra for snāna
(ceremonial both)
7th mantra for vastra
(offering of garments)
8th mantra for upavīta
(offering of sacrificial thread)
9th mantra for anulepana
(offering of unguents)
10th mantra for pushpa
(offering of flowers)
11th mantra for dhūpa
(burning incense)
12th mantra for dīpa
(waving lights)
13th mantra for nivedana
(food-offering)
14th mantra for namaskāra
(prostrations)
15th mantra for pradakshiṇa
(circumambulation)
16th mantra for dakshiṇā
(offering of monetary rewards for the officiating priest)

(5)

The fire-worship (homa) also involves the recital of this hymn.

देवस्य दक्षिणे पार्श्वे कुण्डं स्थण्डिलमेव वा ।
कारयेत्प्रथमेनैव द्वितीयेन तु प्रोक्षणाम् ॥१॥
तृतीयेनाग्निमादध्याच्चतुर्थेन समिन्धनम् ।
पञ्चमेनाज्यश्रपणं चरोश्च श्रपणं तथा ॥२॥
षष्ठेनैवग्निमध्ये तु कल्पयेत्पाद्ममासनम् ।
चिन्तयेद्देवदेवेशं कालानलसमप्रभम् ॥३॥
ततो गन्धं च पुष्पं च धूपदीपनिवेदनम् ।

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अनुज्ञाप्य ततः कुर्यात्सप्तम्यादियथा-

क्रमम् ॥४॥

समिधस्तावतीः पूर्वं जुहुयादभिघारिताः ।

ततो घृतेन जुहुयाच्चरुणा च ततः पुनः ॥५॥

The altar for the fire is to be *eracked* on the right side of the deity that is being worshipped.

1st mantra for Kuṇḍa-sthāpanā *(setting up the ritual seat)*

2nd mantra for prōkshaṇa *(consecration by sprinkling)*

3rd mantra for ādāna *(bringing of the fire).*

4th mantra for sam-indhana *(stoking the fire)*

5th mantra for ājya-śrapaṇa *(consecrating the offering, ājyā and charu).*

6th mantra for deva-chintana *(visualizing the deity).*

7th mantra for gandha *(offering sandal-paste).*

8th mantra for pushpa *(offering flowers).*

9th mantra for dhūpa *(burning incense)*

10th mantra for dīpa *(waving of lights)*

11th mantra for nivedana *(food offering)*

12th mantra for samidādhāna *(bringing of ritual faggots)*

13th mantra for abhighāra *(consecrating with ghee)*

14th mantra for samid-homa *(offering of consecrated faggots into fire)*

15th mantra for ājya-homa *(offering of ghee into fire).*

16th mantra for charu-homa *(offering of rice into fire)*

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(6)

The intentions of the devotee while undertaking Purusha-sūkta-homa (begetting a nice male child) and the best possible time for it (the twelfth lunar day of the month in the bright half, after having fasted on the previous day) are mentioned:

शुक्लपक्षे शुभे वारे सुनक्षत्रे सुगोचरे ।

द्वादश्यां पुत्रकामाय चरुं कुर्वीत वैष्णवम् ॥१॥

दम्पत्योरुपवासः स्यादेकादश्यां सुरालये ।

ऋग्भिः षोडशभिः सम्यगर्चयित्वा जनार्दनम् ॥२॥

चरुं पुरुषसूक्तेन श्रपयेत्पुत्रकाम्यया ।

प्राप्नुयाद्वैष्णवं पुत्रमचिरात्सन्ततिक्षमम् ॥३॥

हुत्वाग्निं विधिवत्सम्यगृग्भिः षोडशभि -

र्द्विजः ।

कृताञ्जलपुटो भूत्वा स्तवं ताभिः प्रयोजयेत् ॥४॥

The homa must be performed reciting the sixteen mantras of the hymn. After the homa is completed, one must recite the sixteen mantras with folded hands as laudatory verses. It is customary to repeat this homa on twelve dvādaśīs (twelfth lunar days)

(7)

Other procedures of worship with the mantras of Purusha-sūktā are mentioned.

फलाहारे भवेन्मासं पश्यत्यात्मानमात्मनि ।

फलानि भुक्त्वोपवसेन्मासमर्द्धञ्च वर्तयेत् ॥१॥

अरण्ये निवसेन्नित्यं जपन्नेतमृषिं सदा ।

त्रिस्त्रिषवणकालेषु स्नायादप्सु समाहितः ॥२॥

आदित्यमुपतिष्ठेत सूक्तेनानेन नित्यशः ।

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आज्याहुतीरनेनैव हुत्वैतं चिन्तयेदृषिम् ॥३॥

ऊर्ध्वं मासात्फलाहारस्त्रिभिर्वर्षैर्जयेद्दिवम् ।

तद्भक्तस्तन्मनायुक्तो दशवर्षाण्यनन्यभाक् ॥४॥

साक्षात्पाश्यति तं देवं नारायणमनामयम् ।

ग्राह्यमत्यन्तयत्नेन स्रष्टारं जगतोऽव्ययम् ॥५॥

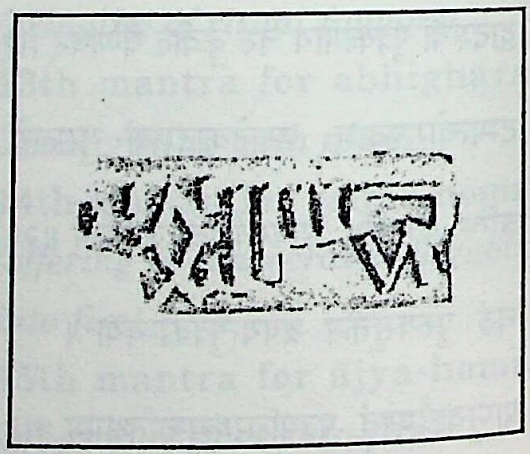
One who lives for a month only on fruits and water, reciting the Purusha-sūkta, will acquire the vision of his own self. This vrata must be performed living in a forest retreat, contemplating on the seer of the hymn (viz.Nārāyaṇa), bathing three times a day, and being pure in body and mind. Sūrya (the solar deity) is the object of worship during this period. Offering of ājya into fire every day of the month is also prescribed.

(8)

Recital of the hymn is also indicated for acquisition of knowledge of the Self-fulfilment of life, heavenly bliss and merit. It is also involved in yoga and in contemplation.

पुरुषस्य हरेः सूक्तं स्वर्ग्यं धन्यं यशस्करम् ।

आत्मज्ञानमिदं पुण्यं योगध्यानमिदं परम् ॥



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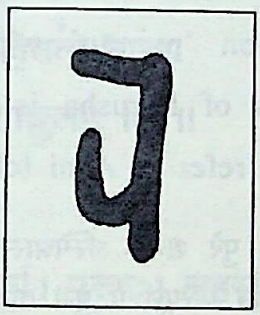
CHAPTER TWO

PURUSHA - SŪKTA



The sūkta called Paurusha (for it has Purusha as devatā) with sixteen ṛks constitutes the ninetieth of the seventh anuvāka of the tenth maṇḍala in *Ṛgveda-samhitā* (or ashṭaka 8, adhyāya 4, varga 17-19). Kātyāyana's *Saruvānukramaṇī* (60, 5) gives Nārāyaṇa as the seer (ṛshi) and Purusha as the deity invoked (devatā). The lineage of the seer has not been mentioned. And the deity Purusha is the well-known spirit as the twenty-fifth principle, and not to be mistaken for a human person. Ānanda-tīrtha mentions that Purusha is so called because of his fullness and because he represents totality of existence. Sāyaṇa explains that the spirit is called Purusha to distinguish him from Prakṛti (with twenty-four principles) characterized by avyakta, mahat and so on. Purusha is the creator, the source of the universe, according to Śaunaka. The first fifteen verses are in anushṭup-chhandas, the last one being in trishṭup. In *Vājasaneyi-Samhitā,* the anushṭup used here is more specifically termed as nichṛd-anushṭup.

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(1) Kātyāyana's *Anukramaṇī:*

सहस्रशीर्षा षोळश नारायणः पौरुषमानुष्टुभं त्रिष्टुबन्तं तु॥

(पुरुषः। नारायणो नाम। नास्य गोत्रमुपदेशेष्वनुक्तेः। यथोपदेशमिति द्युक्तम्। (परिशिष्टे १.१)। पौरुषं पुरुष देवत्यम्। इतिहास प्रसिद्धोऽयं पुरुषः पञ्चविंशकः। उक्तं हि-

इतिहासदिसिद्धो यः पञ्चविंशः पुमान् स तु।
इह योग्यतया स्तुत्यो न जातिपुरुषोऽश्ववत्॥

इति। आनुष्टुभमिति शिष्टा जगत्यपवादः। त्रिष्टुबन्तमिदमुत्तरं च॥)

(2) Śaunaka's *Ṛgvidhāna:*

आनुष्टुभस्य सूक्तस्य त्रिष्टुबन्तस्य देवता।
पुरुषो वै जगद्बीजं ऋषिर्नारायणः स्मृतः॥

(3) Sāyaṇa's *Ṛgbhāshya:*

सहस्रशीर्षेति षोडशर्चं षष्ठं सूक्तम्। नारायणो नामर्षिः। अन्त्या त्रिष्टुप् शिष्टा आनुष्टुभः। अव्यक्तमहदादिविलक्षणश्चेतनो यः पुरुषः। 'पुरुषान्न परं किञ्चित्' इत्यादि श्रुतिषु प्रसिद्धः स देवता।

(4) Ānanda-tīrtha's *Ṛgbhāshya:*

स पूर्णत्वात्पुमान्नाम पौरुषे सूक्त ईरितः।

It may be noted that the expression 'pumān' which is a synonym of Purusha is explicitly made to refer to Agni (cf. 4,3,10)

(5) पुरे शरीरे ऽस्मिन्नास्ते। पूर्णताद्धि पुरुषः। सर्वत्र परिपूर्णः॥ पुरी षादः पुरि शयः पूरयतेर्वा॥ पूरयत्यन्तः इति अन्तरपुरुषमभिप्रेत्य॥

(6) Yāska's *Nirukta* (2,3):

यस्मात्परं नापरमस्ति किञ्चिद्यस्मान्नाणीयो न ज्यायोऽस्ति किञ्चित्।

वृक्ष इव स्तब्धः दिवि तिष्ठस्तेनेदं पूर्णं पुरुषेण सर्वं इत्यपि निगमो भवति॥

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(1)

(संहितापाठः)

सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः
सहस्रपात्।
स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वा
त्यतिष्ठद्दशाङ्गुलम् ॥१॥

(पदपाठः)

सहस्रऽशीर्षा। पुरुषः। सहस्राक्षः।
सहस्रपात्।
सः। भूमिं। विश्वतः। वृत्वा। अति ।
अतिष्ठत्। दशऽअङ्गुलम्॥

(अन्वयः)

पुरुषः सहस्रशीर्षा सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् (भवति)। सः विश्वतो भूमिं वृत्वा दशाङ्गुलं अति अतिष्ठत्॥

(1) सहस्र .....॥

The Purusha is thousand-headed, thousand-eyed, and with thousand feet. He encompassed the universe, and transcended it by ten aṅgulas. The expression 'sahasra' is not to be taken in its literal sense. It means 'many', 'innumerable'. *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (8,7,4,11) gives 'all', 'entirely' (sakala) as the meaning of 'sahasra' ('sahasrāyatveti sarvam vai sahasram sarvam asi'). Sāyaṇa suggests that the expression 'sahasra' is metaphorical in nature; by implication, it means infinity ('sahasra-śabdasya upalakshaṇatvāt anantaih...). The Purusha has here the all-encompassing, universal body (brahmāṇḍa-deha), the form of the aggregation or totality of all living creatures (sarva-prāṇi-samashṭi-rūpa). According to Sāyaṇa, this is designated as 'Virāṭ' (to be explained later, see verse

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5). He has innumerable heads, eyes and feet in the sense that the heads, eyes and feet of all beings are in fact the heads, eyes and feet of the Purusha alone. The parts of the body mentioned, again, are metaphorical, and by implication all parts of the body of individual beings are meant. They are all included in the 'body' (or form) of Purusha.

For the employment of 'sahasra' in the sense of 'countless' in *Ṛgveda,* see 7,55,7 'sahasra-śṛiṅga-vṛshabha' (the bull with a thousand horns), 9,101,6 'sahasra-dhāra' (thousand streams), 10,114,8 'sahasradhā mahimānah' (thousand-fold glory), 9,58,4, 'sahasra-dāna (thousand gifts), 1,11,8 'sahasra-rātayah' (thousand-measured wealth), 'sahasra-ayutā dātā', (giver of thousands and myriads), 'sahasra-chetāh' (thousand-spirits) and so on. In *Yajurveda* (17, 71), Agni is described as thousand-eyed, having hundred vital currents, and a thousand breaths, and as the ground of the world of thousands of beings:

अग्ने सहस्राक्ष शतं ते प्राणाः सहस्रं व्यानाः।
त्वं सहस्रॅस्य रायऽईशिषे तस्मै ते विधेम
वाजाय स्वाहा॥

In *Śvetāśvatara* (3,3) we have not only the mantra -

विश्वतश्चक्षुरुत विश्वतो मुखो
विश्वतो बाहुरुत विश्वतस्पात्।

but also an explanation thereof (3,11 and 13):

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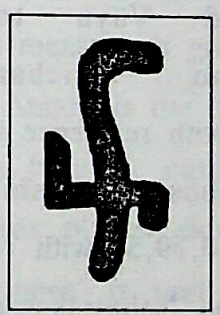
सर्वाननशिरोग्रीवः सर्वभूतगुहाशयः।
सर्वव्यापी स भगवांस्तस्मात्सर्वगतः शिवः॥
अङ्गुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषोऽन्तरात्मा
सदा जनानां हृदये संनिविष्टः।

after which, the first two mantras of Purusha-sūkta are repeated verbatim in the body of the Upanishadic text.

Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (8,7,4,11) gives 'sahasra' (meaning 'all', 'entire') as the very measure, image or designation of the Supreme Spirit,

सहस्रस्य प्रमासि। सहस्रस्य प्रतिमासि। सहस्रस्योन्मासि। सहस्रोऽसि सहस्रायत्वेति। सर्वं वै सहस्रं। सर्वमसि। सर्वस्मैत्येतत्॥

Three organs mentioned here are head, eyes and legs. Head symbolically represents will (saṅkalpa), the eyes vision and knowledge (darśana), and legs movement, action and transactions (vyavahāra). The import is that all resolves, understandings and operations in the world are actually made possible by the presence of the Purusha.



Of the three descriptive epithets of the Purusha, the first one, viz, 'sahasra-śīrshā' is not to be found anywhere else in the *Ṛgvedic* corpus. The third one, viz. 'sahasra-pāt' is found only in one other passage in *Ṛgveda* (8,69,16) in connection with eulogizing the

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Sun. It is to be noted that 'pāda' (or foot) is also used in the sense of rays of light (raśmi); and sahasra-pāt naturally refers to Sūrya. The second epithet, viz. 'sahasrāksha', however, recurs in four more passages: 'sahasrākshā dhiyaspatī', (1,23,3) referring to Indra and Vāyu together; 'sahasrāksho vicharshaṇih' (1,79,12), with reference to Agni; 'tasmai sahasram akshibhir vi chakshe' (10,79,5) with reference to Agni; and 'sahasrākṣheṇa śata-śāradena' (10,161,3) with reference to Indra, or havis, or again to the deity which destroys the disease known as rāja-yakshma.

From these references, it is easy to see that the ideology of Purusha comprehends the concepts of Agni, Indra, Vāyu and Sūrya. Agni is the devatā of the earth, Indra/Vayu of the mid-region, and Sūrya of the celestial realm (in the tri-sthāna-devatā framework). And Agni is a form of Sūrya; even as Vishṇu (tripāt) is. In fact, Purusha-sūkta is traditionally regarded as a eulogy of Vishṇu, in his role as Sūrya, Agni and yajña ('yajño vai vishṇuh). Sūrya is also identified with Viśva-karmā (RV. 10. 170. 4), the maker-of-all; and he makes three giant strides (morning, noon and evening) and hence called 'tripāt' or Vishṇu (pervader of earth, sky and air). In this sense, he symbolizes the essence (rasa) of all existence, the core-principle of existence, of which Agni, Sūrya and Indra (Vāyu) are but aspects.

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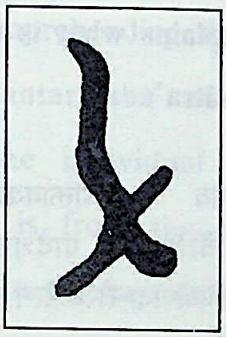

(2) भूमिम्..... ॥

The word 'bhūmi' (literally earth) here means the entire universe ('brahmāṇḍa-golaka-rupām', Sāyaṇa) and it includes by implication all the three realms (bhūh, bhuvah and svah). The Purusha encompasses this, surrounds it from all sides ('sarvato pariveshṭya'), that is to say, he enters into all that there is, without leaving any gap. He makes it his base (adhishṭhāya), says Sāyaṇa. He fills all existence, and hence he is called Purusha ('pūrayati', pṛṇāti, vyāpnoti). Encompassing is by his own might and majesty (sva-mahimnā).

(3) दशाङ्गुलम्..... ॥

The Purusha's measure exceeds that of the universe he encompasses. The excess of the Purusha's measure is given as 'ten aṅgulas'. Aṅgula is the Indian inch, a finger's breadth, equal to eight barley-corns placed side by side. 'Ten of these' is said to be the measure of man's height, or prādeśa-mātra; which is also the measure involved in the sacrificial altar (yajña-vedi). *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (10,2,1,2) has this account:

तं वा (यज्ञवेदिं) अङ्गुलिभिर्मिमीते। पुरुषो वै यज्ञस्तेनेद ँ सर्वं मितम्। तस्यैषावमा मात्रा यदङ्गुलयः ॥

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The same text (10,6,1,10-11) suggests that the measure represents Agni-Vaiśvānara as the person who fills and enlivens the human body; it is established inside man's physical frame, and hence is called the person-image (purusha-vidha).

प्रादेशमात्रमिव ह वै देवाः सुविदिता अभिसम्पन्नाः।... स एषोऽग्निर्वैश्वानरो यत्पुरुषः। स यो ह्यैतमेवाग्निं वैश्वानरं पुरुषविधं पुरुषोऽन्तः प्रतिष्ठितं वेद॥

The notion of 'purusha-vidha' (person-image) involves the measure of the space between the top of the fore-head (mūrdhā) and the lower line of the chin (chibuka) (mūrdhādi chibukānteshu purushāvayaveshu purusha-vidhatvam kalpitam). Śamkara, while commenting on *Chhāndogya* (5, 18), explains what is meant by 'prādeśa-mātra':

यस्त्वेनमेवं यथोक्तावयवयैर्मूर्धादिभिः पृथिवीपादान्तैर्विशिष्टमेकं प्रादेशमात्रं प्रादेशैः द्युमूर्धादिभिः पृथिवीपादान्तैरध्यात्मं मीयते ज्ञायत इति प्रादेशमात्रम्॥

and on the *Vedānta-sūtra* (1,2,31):

द्युप्रभृतीन् पृथिवीपर्यन्तान् त्रैलोक्यात्मनो वैश्वानरस्यावयवान् अध्यात्ममूर्धप्रभृतिषु चिबुकपर्यन्तेषु देहावयवेषु सम्पादयत् प्रादेशमात्रसम्पत्तिं परमेश्वरस्य दर्शयति॥

The Vaiśvānara's body extends from the heavens to the

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earth, comprehending three realms (dyauh, antariksha and pṛthivī); and at the individual level, the extension is from the top of the forehead to the bottom-line of the chin. In this area also the three realms are seen represented (cf. Śamkara on *Vedānta-sūtra,* 1,2,32, 'bhruvoh ghrāṇasya cha sandhih yas sa esha dyulokasya parasya cha sandhir bhavatīti'). The fixing of the two limits (mūrdhā on the one hand, and chibuka on the other) and ascertaining the extent of the space between these limits is what is meant by 'prādeśa-mātra'. This is said to correspond to 'daśāṅgula'. The Purusha can be visualized here easily, which is the reason for the especial mention of this area.

Mahīdhara, on the other hand, takes the measure 'daśāṅgula' to refer to the heart (where the Purusha abides), which is above the navel (nābhi) at a distance of ten aṅgulas. The Purusha is the light that shines within the heart-lotus, which is also the seat of the soul.

यद्वा नाभेः सकाशाद्दशाङ्गुलमतिक्रम्य हृदि स्थितः। नाभित इति कुतो लभ्यते? कतम आत्मा इत्युपक्रम्य सोऽयं विज्ञानमयः प्राणेषु हृद्यन्तर्ज्योतिरिति श्रुतेः (कौ०उ०४,१२;६,१७)। विज्ञानात्मनः हृद्यवस्थानं कर्मफलोपभोगाय....।

Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara *(Taittirīya-āraṇyaka-bhāshya* 2,12,1) takes the same view: the heart-space (hṛdayākāśa) is of the daśāṅgula-measure, according to him. He further says that the expressions 'heart', 'sky', 'Purusha' are all synonymous.

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दशाङ्गुलं दशाङ्गुलप्रमाणावच्छिन्नम्। दश अङ्गुलयः प्रमाणं अस्य इति। अत्र सामर्थ्यात् हृदयाकाश परिग्रहः। हृदयाकाशस्यैव दशाङ्गुलमित्याख्येति केचित्। हृदयं गगनं पुरुष इति पर्यायः॥

Alternately, the expression 'daśāṅgula' refers to the heavenly region, because the Purusha transcends the regions of earth by ten aṅgulas and settles himself in the high heavens, and not below ten aṅgulas:

यद्वा स्वर्गप्रकरणमिदम्। अतो विकारजातं भूम्यादिकं वृत्वा पदेनैव घनमावृत्य दशाङ्गुलमतितिष्ठति। दशङ्गुलादधोऽधिष्ठानं न करोति॥

There is another view that 'daśāṅgula' refers to the space inside the mouth, between the two jaws; this is said to be the representative of the space inside the universe.

मुखादिषु वा करणेषु अत्तृत्वेन मीयत इति प्रादेशमात्रः॥

However, Sayāṇa says that this (daśāṅgula) is only a figurative expression, which means that it cannot be measured, or definitely ascertained. The import is that the Purusha is beyond all things, and superior to all things: he pervades not only all that exists but also what does not exist. The word 'atyatishṭhat' means 'stays transcending it' (atikramya sthitavān):

औपचारिकमिदं वचः। परिमातुमशक्यत्वात्। सर्वतोऽधिकं व्याप्य तिष्ठतीति॥

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(संहितापाठः)

पुरुष एवेदं सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यम्।
उतामृतत्वस्येशानो
यदन्नेनातिरोहति ॥२॥

(पदपाठः)

पुरुषः। एव। इदम्। सर्वम्। यत्।
भूतम्। यत्। च। भव्यम्।
उत। अमृतऽत्वस्य। ईशानः।
यत्। अन्नेन। अतिऽरोहति॥

(अन्वयः)

इदं यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यं सर्वं पुरुष एव। उत अमृतत्वस्य (सः एव) ईशानः॥

All this, entire world, whatever has been (bhūta) and whatever will come to be (bhavya), is Purusha alone. Further (uta), this Purusha is the lord (īśāna) of immortality (amṛta). Thus far, the import is clear: what follows (viz. 'yad annena adhirohati'), however, needs clarification, and that is why the anvaya for this has not been given.

(1) पुरुष एवेदं... ॥

The statement that the Purusha is all this that exists now and is presented to us (idam) continues the trend of thought suggested by the last words of the previous mantra ('bhūmim viśvato vṛtvā atya-tishṭhat'). If 'bhūmi' there refers to the spatial extension of existence (inclusive of the three regions which are subject to change, 'vikāra-jātam bhūmyādikam sarvam', Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara), the synonymously employed expression 'idam' is made to comprehend the three segments

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of time: present, past (bhūtam) and future (bhavyam). And as in the case of 'bhūmim', he transcends 'idam' also by implication. In other words, he is beyond space and time. He is immutable and eternal. Immutability is beyond 'bhūmi', and eternity is beyond 'idam'. In *Kaṭha-upanishad* (4,12, and 13), we have the description of Purusha who abides in the centre of individual being (madhya ātmani) as 'the lord of both the past and the future (including by implication the present 'sa evādya'), and the words used there are precisely the same as those used in the mantra under consideration:

ईशानो भूतभव्यस्य।

In *Śvetāśvatara-upanishad* (6,5) there is an explicit statement that he is beyond the three-fold time ('paras-trikālād'). The Purusha is no doubt all that is in space and time, but he also extends beyond this spatio-temporal framework of phenomenal existence. This transcendence is what has been termed here 'amṛtatva', which will be explained shortly. About the lordship, we have it said in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upanishad* (2,5,15) that this ātman (or Purusha) is the over-lord of all beings, the monarch of all beings. As the spokes are settled in the hub of a wheel, all beings, all the divinities, all the worlds and all energies are settled in this self.

स वा अयमात्मा सर्वेषां भूतानमधिपतिः सर्वेषां भूतानां राजा। तद्यथा रथनाभौ च रथनेमौ च अराः सर्वे समर्पिताः एवमेव अस्मिन् आत्मनि सर्वाणि भूतानि सर्वे देवाः सर्वे लोकाः सर्वे प्राणाः सर्व एत आत्मानः समार्पिताः॥

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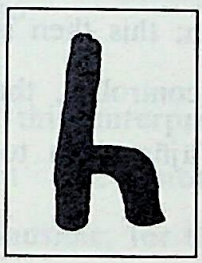
Elsewhere (4,4,22), the same text declares that he is the lord (īśāna) of all, the overload (adhipati) of all-

सर्वस्य वशी सर्वस्येशानः सर्वस्याधिपतिः ॥



(2) अमृतत्वस्येशानः ॥

The Purusha is the lord (īśāna) of immortality (amṛtatva). There is another mantra in *Ṛgveda* (5,58,1) where the same idea is expressed. Maruts who are associates of Vāyu are said to lord over immortality ('īśire amṛtasya'). Veṅkaṭa-mādhava explains mortality (viz. liability to change, decay and death) as the consequence of the Purusha abandoning the things and beings that are mobile or stationary or the divinities that preside over them (viz. sense-faculties and functions)

यदा ह्ययं स्थावरं जङ्गमं वा विमुञ्चति देवान् वा तदानीं तत् मृत इत्याख्यायते ॥

That is why, according to *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (10, 5, 2, 16), it is irrelevant to ask whether mortality is one or manifold. It could be one or many. The Sun is one without a second for the worlds. If he withdraws his presence, there is one death for the entire world. But the Sun is also present for the individual beings severally; and if his presence is withdrawn from any of the beings there is death for that particular being. Death here is multiple.

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एको मृत्युर्बहव इत्येकश्च बहवश्चेति ह ब्रूयात्। यदहासौ अमुत्र तेनैकोऽथ यदिह प्रजासु बहुधा व्याविष्टस्तेनो बहवः॥

The Sun is the Purusha in the present context. Mortality is linked up with the withdrawal of his presence.

When viewed thus, the absence of mortality (viz. immortality) signifies the presence of the Purusha as the inner controller (antaryāmi) of all things and all beings. Significantly in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upanishad* (3,7,15) this presence as antaryāmi is identified with being immortal (antaryāmyamṛtah):

यः सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्; सर्वेभ्यो भूतेभ्यो अन्तरः; यं सर्वाणि भूतानि न विदुः; यस्य सर्वाणि भूतानि शरीर; यः सर्वाणि भूतानि अन्तरो यमयति; एषः ते आत्मा, अन्तर्याम्यमृतः॥

The Ātman (viz. Purusha) abides in all beings, distinct from all of them; the beings cannot know him fully; all beings but serve as a physical frame (or body) for him; and he controls all beings from within; this then is your self, the inner controller, the immortal. So says Yājñavalkya to Uddālaka-āruṇi.

Sāyaṇa takes 'amṛtatva' to mean 'devatva' (the status of a divinity 'uta api cha amṛtatvasya devatvasya īsānah svāmī'). The gods are by definition immortal; they do not suffer change, decay or death. In this sense, being the lord of immortality may mean being the lord of the gods (divinities). The past, present and future apply to the things and beings on earth

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and in the midregion. The gods who are the denizens of the upper realm (dyauh), are beyond the hold of space and time. The sway of the Purusha extends beyond the earth and the midregion to the heavens also.

While this interpretation is possible, it does not appear altogether plausible, for this half of the line ('amṛtatvasyeśānah) is linked up with the other half ('yad annenātirohati'), and cannot be taken as self-contained. However, the significance of the second half of the line is not easy to comprehend. Further, 'immortality' has a nuance of meaning which is more than mere deathlessness. A clue is offered in *Nairukta-Nighaṇṭu,* where 'amṛta' is included under the names of gold (hiraṇya-nāmāni). Although the literal meaning of 'amṛta' would be 'being free from destruction and death' (naṅg-pūrvāt mriyateh', tani-mṛṅgbhyām kichcha, *Uṇādi-sūtra,* 3,85) (nāsti mṛtam maraṇam asya, na mriyate anena vā), the text significantly cites a passage from *Ṛgveda* (1,72,1) to justify its taking this word in the sense of gold. But no explanation is available here. The passage cited refers to Agni bestowing gold on his devotees (according to Sāyaṇa).

सत्रा चक्राणो अमृतानि विश्वा

Sāyaṇa interprets the word 'amṛtāni' here as referring to gold ('hiraṇya-namaitat'), and quotes a passage from *Atharva-veda* (5,28,11, or 9,26,1) in his support. But he finds this meaning inappropriate when construed with

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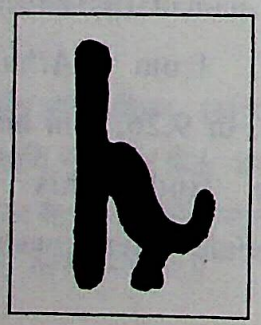
'chakrāṇo' (kurvan, 'making'), and so prefers to change the meaning of 'chakrāṇo' to 'gifting' (prayachchan). Should one insist on the more normal meaning of 'making' for 'chakrāṇo', Sāyaṇa proposes to interpret the word 'amṛtāni' to mean the conveyance of sacrificial offerings to the gods by Agni. This is of course far-fetched. It must be noted that in *Nairukta-Nighaṇṭu* there is an explanation offered by the glossator Devarāja-yajvā. Gold does not disappear or lose itself, whatever form it is made to assume; and it is in this sense that it is 'amṛta' (na hiraṇyasya yasyām kasyām chid avasthāyām ātma-nāśo vidyate).



It may also be pointed out that *Praśnopanishat* (2,5) uses the word 'amṛta' along with 'sat' (what is real, what has come to be) and 'asat' (what was in the past or is in the future, but does not exist now) ('sad asachchāmṛtam cha yat'). Here the word 'sat' is being and 'asat' is becoming. The 'amṛta' here is the common ground for both being and becoming. The Vedic mantra under consideration speaks of the Purusha being all this (idam), (sat or Being), and also what was in the past (bhūtam) and will be in future (bhavyam) (asat or becoming); and goes on to describe him as the 'lord of amṛtatva'. The reality as well as appearances (sat and asat, or idam and bhūta-bhavya) are made possible by the common ground

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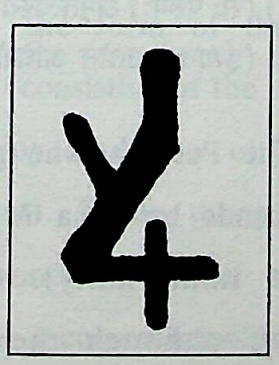
for both, viz. the Purusha. Being and Becoming are nurtured by 'annam' (annena atirohati), also provided by the Purusha. It is the presence (mere presence) of the Purusha that makes all this possible. He continues to be present in reality as well as in appearances, even as gold remains the same in whatever article is made out of it. This is the sense in which *Nairukta-Nighaṇṭu* takes the expression 'amṛta'. It is the self as inner controller (antaryāmin) that is real and also persisting amid all change, and in this sense immortal.



Mahīdhara interprets 'amṛtatva' as salvation (mukti), which is everlasting, and describes the Purusha as the lord of it, in the sense that he bestows it upon his devotees at his will ('amṛtatvasya amaraṇa-dharmasya īśānah; mukter īśānah: yosau nāsau mriyata ity arthah'). According to Mahīdhāra, the Purusha is the lord of salvation as well as the phenomenal existence, which is brought about and nourished by anna (kimcha yat jīva-jātam annena atirohati utpadyate tasya sarvasya cha īśānah'). What is meant is this context is that the Purusha is the very self (ātmā), which is deeply hidden within all creatures. It is the immanent reality, the inner controller. And to realize

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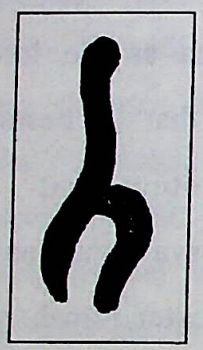
this is tantamount to salvation (mukti).



(3) यदन्नेनातिरोहति॥

As indicated earlier, the second line of the mantra where he is said to mount above through food has two distinct parts, which are necessarily interconnected. While the first part could possibly be taken in an independent sense, the second by its very structure is dependent upon the earlier part. The connecting expression is 'yat' (a relative pronoun in the neuter gender, and in the nominative case), the precise significance of which in the present sentence is rather uncertain. It may plainly be a word referring to 'tat' (viz. the Purusha). The word for Purusha, being in the masculine gender (īśānah), the existing relative pronoun (yat) also may be construed as 'yah' (such transposition being usual in the Vedic passages). The sentence would then either be:

(1) यः (यत्) अन्नेन अधिरोहति (सः) अमृतत्वस्य अपि (उत) (सः) ईशानः।

(2) (सः पुरुषः) अमृतत्वस्य ईशानः अपि (उत), यः (ईशानः) अन्नेन अधिरोहति।

(The Purusha who grows up and ascends by anna is also the lord of immortality). Or (The Purusha, although the lord of

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immortality, yet grows up and ascends by anna).

There is a second sense in which the word 'yat' may be taken. Sāyaṇa has interpreted 'yat' as meaning 'yasmāt' ('because of'), in the causative sense (hetu). That this is possible has been indicated in the lexicon, *Amara-Kosha* (3,4,3). The import, according to him, would be: Because of the power by which the Purusha is the lord of all beings, he has made provision for their sustenance by bringing forth food (anna). He assumes the form of the entire universe (consisting of the creatures that enjoy and the objects of enjoyment). While doing so, he goes beyond the causal condition (which is incomprehensible to us) and grows up into the condition of the effect (viz. the universe that can be perceived and understood).

यत् यस्मात्कारणात्। अन्नेन प्राणिनामन्नेन भोग्येन निमित्तेन। अतिरोहति स्वकीयां कारणावस्थां अतिक्रम्य परिदृश्यमानां जगदवस्थां प्राप्नोति॥

The significant word in the sentence is obviously 'anna'. It is usual to derive the word from the root 'ad' (bhakshaṇe, 'karmaṇi ktah'), which has the sense of eating. Anna is what is eaten by living beings (atti), viz. food; and it is also what eats (or consumes) them (adyate) *(Taittirīya-upanishad* 2,1 'adyate atti cha bhūtāni; tasmād annam tad uchyate'), viz. the karma-phala. Anna, therefore, means the material objects that are taken in by living beings in order

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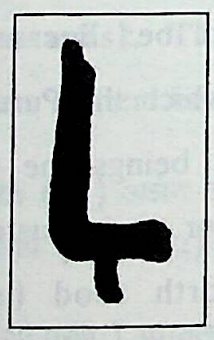
to survive, and also the karma-proclivities that are acquired by the individual beings while procuring food and consuming it. All creatures are born of such food, and survive on food. *Taittirīya-upanishad* (2,1) describes food as the most excellent in the creation, all beings striving to get it:

अन्नाद्वै प्रजाः प्रजायन्ते याः काश्च पृथिवीँ् श्रिताः। अथो अन्नेनैव जीवन्ति।....अन्नं हि भूतानां ज्येष्ठम्। सर्वं वै तेऽन्नमाप्नुवन्ति। ... अन्नाद् भूतानि जायन्ते । जातान्यन्नेन वर्धन्ते। अद्यतेऽत्ति च भूतानि। तस्मदन्नं तदुच्यत इति॥

Mahīdhara takes the word 'anna' as just food, which is responsible for the being and becoming of all creatures, from the most superior Brahmā to the least significant worm (jīva-jātam yat annena atirohati' utpadyate; brahmādi-stamba-paryanto bhūtagrāma uktah; annenaiva tasya sthiteh). Here, the relative pronoun 'yat' is taken in the sense of 'that which', referring to the world of living beings which originate in food and are sustained by it; and we have to supply the words 'tasyāpi īśānah', meaning that the Purusha is the lord of that also.



There is another interpretation which takes 'anna' almost in the same sense: the word refers to the world of actions and the results appropriate to them, comprehending this physical world

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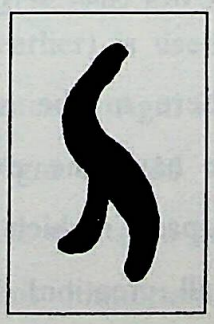
which is unreal, and also the heavenly realms which are reached by ritualistic and religious actions, and which are also unreal ('annena karma - phalābhidhanena asatā aihikāmushmika-prapañchena'). But the expression 'atirohati' is here taken in altogether a different sense: 'a-tirohati' (na tirodhānam gachchhati'), 'does not disappear or vanish'. The import is that the 'amṛtatva', of which the Purusha is the lord, is not obscured or obliterated by the phenomenal world of actions and reactions. It is the real, which cannot be undone by appearances.



However, the *Nairukta-Nighaṇṭu* (3,8) asks 'what is anna?' and answers: 'Anna is so called because living beings incline or bend in its direction, or because it is consumed' ('annam kasmāt? ānatam bhūtebhyo, atter vā'). The word 'annam' is formed from the root 'ad' (bhakshaṇe, karmaṇi ktah, adyate iti) which has the sense of eating. Anna is food, as it is eaten. But the word is also derived from the root 'an' (anity anena), which means 'to breathe' (prāṇanārthaka). (cf. gloss on *Nighaṇṭu,* 'anyate prāṇyate prajābhih; 'atter vā nishṭhātakārah. atra anna iti nirdeśāt jagdhyādeśābhāvah; adyate sma annahetutvādvā annam ityuchyate). The *Nighaṇṭu* gives 'andha' (that by which the creatures live, Kshīra-svāmi),

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'brahma' (bṛhi vṛddhau, bṛṁher, na-lopaścha, *Uṇādi,* 4,141, with manin-prefix) that which makes the creatures grow, and which grows because of the creatures), and 'varcha' (dīptau, glowing, that which gives lustre to the body) as synonymous with 'anna'. 'Anna', derived from the root which has the meaning of movement or going (gatyartha), has by the same fact the meaning of knowledge (jñānārtha); 'anna', therefore, would mean knowledge. According to *Siddhānta-kaumudi*, 'anna', means the Sun (Sūrya). It can thus be seen that the definition given in *Nairukta-Nighaṇṭu* would apply equally justifiably to all these words: food, prāṇa, brahma, jñāna and Sūrya. And it is by these that the Purusha goes beyond his own nature (of being unmanifest, inaccessible to our instruments of cognition, absolutely unitary and pure awareness) and becomes manifest as the Purusha involved in the transactional world.

We read in *Muṇḍakopanishat* (1,1,8): By 'tapas' (austerity or will) 'Brahma' emanated; and from 'Brahma' came forth 'anna', from 'anna' emerged 'prāṇa' as also manas, (mind), satya (truth), lokāh (the worlds of our experience) and amṛta (explained above) in actions:

तपसा चीयते ब्रह्मा ततोऽन्नमभिजायते।
अन्नात्प्राणो मनः सत्यं लोकः कर्मसु चामृतम्॥

Elsewhere in the same text (1,1,9), we have the explanation that the 'tapas', (which was the source of all creation) is of the

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nature of intense and profound knowledge. It is from this tapas that the 'brahma' (the fundamental principle of phenomenal existence), 'nāma-rūpa' (names and forms which constitute the phenomenal existence), and 'anna' (explained above) spring forth.

यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद्यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः।
तस्मादेतद्ब्रह्म नामरूपमन्नं च जायते॥

The words 'amṛtatva' and 'atirohati' in the above mantra may indeed be considered together, for the two words are significantly employed in *Ṛgveda* 'Amṛtatva' (in the sense of immortality as specified earlier) is used especially with reference to Agni in numerous mantras. Agni is said to establish everyday the mortal in the excellent state of this immortality (1,31,7, 'tvam tam agne amṛtatva uttame martam dadhāsi śravase dive dive'). By the grace of Agni, vision of the heavenly realms and immortality are alike secured (1,72,10 'divo yadakshī amṛtāh akṛṇvan'). Waters (from which Agni arose) constitute the navel of this immortality (4,58,1 'ghṛtasya nāma guhyam, ... amṛtasya nābhih'). Agni is resorted to by the gods who are eager to safeguard immortality (1,96,6, 'amṛtatvam rakshamāṇāsa enam devāh agni dhārayan draviṇodām'). Vaiśvānara-Agni's rites bring about this immortality (6,7,4 'tava kratubhir amṛtatvam āyan vaiśvānara'). Agni is invoked for the sake of this immortality (10,52,5, 'ā vo yakhyamṛtatvam'). Sauchīka-Agni helps the gods attain to immortality (10,53,10 'yena

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devāso amṛtatvam ānaśuh'). Savitṛ, the engaging form of Sūrya, who is in his turn the significant form of Agni, is also associated with this immortality, and helps the mortal to attain to immortality (1,110,3 'tat savitā vo-mṛtatvam āsuvad agohyam', 4, 'mantāsah santo amṛtatvam ānaśuh'). Savitṛ is responsible for the procurement of the excellent and initial share of immortality by the gods through the sacrificial rites (4,54,2, 'devebhyo hi prathamam yajñiyebhyo-mṛtatvam survasi bhāgam uttamam'). When Sūrya causes rains to pour down from the sky, immortality spreads alround (4,58,1, 'samudrād ūrmir madhumāng udāradupāmśunā sam amṛtatvam ānat').

Then there is this expression 'atirohati', which literally means mounts up, ascends, climbs. It suggests an upward movement, a transcendence, growth into a higher state or level of being. There are several mantras in *Ṛgveda* where the same expression is employed, mostly with reference to Sūrya. In one mantra (10, 8, 20), Sūryā (probably Ushas) is sought to make Sūrya rise up to the realm of immortality ('āroha sūrye amṛtasya lokam'). Sūrya rises to the sky of light or heavens (1, 50, 11, 'udayan adya mitram aha arohan'); Sūrya

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is seen when we rise up to the vast oceans above (the heavenly realm, or the principle of time, kāla) (10, 37, 8), 'ārohantam bṛhatah pājasas pari vayam jīvāh prati paśyema sūrya'). Varuṇa and Mitra (4,13,2) make the sun ascend to the high heavens. Or it is Indra that prompts Sūrya to rise up to the sky, so that he may be sighted all the time (1,7,3 'indro dīrghāya chakshasa ā sūryam rohayad divi'); Indra's fight with the demon of darkness and draught, Vṛtra, is linked up with the sun's mounting up to the heavenly realm (1,51,4 'vṛtram yad indra śavasāva dhīraham ādit sūryam divy ārohayo dṛśe'); Indra helps Sūrya ascend to the sky so that the process of ripening on earth is facilitated (8, 89,7, 'āmāsu pakvam airaya ā sūryam rohayo divi').

In one mantra (10, 156, 4) Agni is credited with raising Sūrya to the vast sky so that light may shine on all creatures ('agne nakshatram ajaram ā sūryam rohayo divi, dadhaj jyotir janebhyah').

And Agni (the devatā of the earth region) is frequently mentioned in connection with 'anna' in Ṛgvedic mantras (as many as eighteen times), and likewise Indra, the devatā of the mid-region is associated with 'anna' almost as often (about fourteen times). Thus the expression 'annena atirohati' becomes meaningful, when viewed against the background of Sūrya's mission of rising from the earth region and mid-region into the celestial region, assisted by Agni

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and Indra. It may also be noted that Purusha-sūkta employs other expressions synonymously with 'atirohati': 'ūrdhva udait' (4), 'vyakrāmat' (op.cit) and 'ajāyata' (5). In all these contexts, the roles of Sūrya (dyus-sthāna), Indra (madhyama-sthāma). Agni (pṛthivī - sthāna) are coalesced into the character of the all-prevading Vishṇu, who is in fact the primary import of the expression Purusha.

It remains, however, to be considered how 'amṛtatva' becomes related to 'atirohati'. If 'atirohaṇa' has the sense of transcendence of the earth and the midregion (with all the creatures abiding in them) into the realm of the bright heavens (dyus-sthāna, where Sūrya dwells), 'amṛtatva' must refer to the reality of this realm of the bright heavens. (cf. next mantra, 'amṛtam divi'). Quite frequently the devas (dwellers of the heavenly realm, 'dyus-sthānād devāh') are associated with 'amṛtatva' (e.g. 10, 53,10, 'devā'; 10,52,5 'yathā vo devā varivah karāṇi'). And 'ati-rohaṇa' (transcendence) is as frequently associated with the heavenly realm, which is referred to as 'amṛtasya loka' (10, 85, 20) (e.g. 10, 156, 4 'rohayo divi'; 1,51,4 'divy ārohayo'; 1,7,3, 'āsūryam rohayad divi'; and 8,89,7 'rohayo divi').

'Amṛtatva' (immortality), as explained earlier, is the negation of mṛtyu (death, decay, destruction). Durgāchārya (on *Nirukta,* 11,1,8) explains that 'mṛtyu' is synonymous with 'madhyama-prāṇa; it kills the

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individual being, as it (the madhyama-prāṇa) ascends to the higher regions, taking with it the other vital currents that would be involved in keeping the body alive:

मृत्युरिति वक्तव्यम्। स कस्मात्? मारयतीति सतः। मध्यमो हि प्राणो मृत्युः। उत्क्रामन् शरीरादितरैः प्राणैः प्रणिनो वियोजयति एवं मारयति॥

Thus the expression 'ut-krāmati' (goes up) is synonymous with 'ati-rohati' (ascends, transcends). Where the madhyama-prāṇa goes, or the region where the ascent is accomplished, is 'amṛtatva' (beyond the hold of death): this is obviously 'dyus-sthāna' (divi), where the devatā is Sūrya. Sūrya is explained by Yāska (*Nirukta,* uttara-shaṭka, 12,2,3) as so called because he moves onward (sarpaṇa), moves about in the sky (sarati ākāśe), procreates all creatures (prasuvati), and inspires and prompts all creatures in their own activities (preraṇa). Durgāchārya takes the last detail in the sense of Vāyu prompting the movement of the Sun:

सूर्यः सर्तेवा सुवतेर्वा स्वीयतेर्वा तस्यैषा भवति॥

(सूर्यः इति वक्तव्यम्। स पुनरयं भगकालात् सृतः सूर्यो भवति। ''सर्त्रेः वा'' सूर्यः। ''प्रसुवतेर्वा'' प्रसवार्थस्य, स एव हि इदं सर्वं प्रसुवति जनयति इत्यर्थः। ''स्वीयतेर्वा'' सुपूर्वस्य वा ईरयतेः गत्यर्थस्य, वायुना ह्ययं सुष्ठु ईर्यते प्रेर्यते इत्यर्थः॥)

Moving about in the sky, and being moved upward by Vāyu, indicate the ascent through the mid-region. And Yāska further cites a passage from *Ṛgveda* (1,50,1 'udutyam jātvedasam') and points out that the ascent is for all

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creatures to behold ('dṛśe viśvāya') and profit by the rays of the sun which are beams of knowledge ('ketavah', prajñā-nāma, *Nighaṇṭu* 3,9,2).

उदु त्यं जातवेदसं देवं वहन्ति केतवः।
दृशे विश्वाय सूर्यम्॥

(उद्वहन्ति तं जातवेदसं रश्मयः केतवः सर्वेषां भूतानां दर्शनाय सूर्यमिति॥)

He proceeds to quote another Vedic passage where Sūrya is eulogized as filling with his majesty the heavenly realm, the earth and the midregion, and as the very self of all things and beings (12,2,6)

आ प्रा द्यावापृथिवी अन्तरिक्षं
सूर्य आत्मा जगतस्तस्थुषश्च॥

(सर्वभूतानुप्रवेशी आ प्राः, आपूपुरत्, आपूरयति द्यावापृथिव्यौ च अन्तरि क्षं च महत्त्वेन सूर्य आत्मा।)

Sūrya has a transcendental aspect, insofar as he 'transcends' (ati-rohati); he is the spirit, in this aspect, in the solar orb, the spirit illumining the three realms, himself being in the highest realm (divi), the controller from outside (īśāna). There is also an immanent aspect as 'antaryāmin', as residing in the right eye, and as the immortal and essential spirit (amṛta). The idea of Purusha comprehends both aspects.

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(3)

(संहितापाठः)

एतावानस्य महिमातो ज्यायांश्च
पूरुषः।
पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि
त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ॥३॥

(पदपाठः)

एतावान्। अस्य। महिमा। अतः।
ज्यायान्। च। पुरुषः।
पादः। अस्य। विश्वा। भूतानि।
त्रिऽपात्। अस्य। अमृतं। दिवि॥

(अन्वयः)

एतावान् अस्य (पुरुषस्य) महिमा। च
(उत) पुरुषः अतः ज्यायान्।
विश्वा भूतानि अस्य पादः। अस्य त्रिपात्
दिवि अमृतम् (व्यवतिष्ठते)॥

Whatever is there in the phenomenal world is but the Purusha's majesty. But in his own nature he is much greater than this. All that exists before us is only one quarter of his nature or majesty, while the remaining three quarters are settled beyond our ken, in the celestial heights; untouched by change, decay or death.

(1) एतावान् अस्य महिमा।

So much is his greatness. The expression 'etāvān' (from 'etad' or 'this' with the prefix 'vatup', according to the rule 'yat tad etebhyah parimāṇe vatup' 5,2,39, meaning 'etad parimāṇam' 'so much', 'of such measure or magnitude', referring to quantity, number or size, cf. Pāṇini, 2,4,15)

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presupposes whatever has been said in the previous mantra: that the Purusha is all this which is within the framework of space and time, and also all that is outside this framework, and that he is the lord of 'amṛtatva' as well as of the phenomenal world which grows by all that the living beings incline towards. In this expression is included the world in the past, in the present and in the future ('atītānāgata-vartamāna-rūpam jagad-yāvad asti'), and the world of living beings of all orders and the divinities of all types ('yad idam deva-tiryaṅg-mānushātmakam dṛśyate).

The word 'mahimā' (or mahiman) which means greatness, might, glory, majesty or power, is derived from 'mahat' (in the sense of exceeding) (with 'imanich', 'pṛthvādibhyah imanij vā', 5,1,122). Sāyaṇa explains this greatness as Purusha's own especial prowess ('svakīya-sāmarthya-viśeshah'), and this makes him superior to everything else (utkarsha). When this 'mahimā' is enumerated as one of the eight supreme powers of a great god like Śiva or Vishṇu, it signifies that the fourteen worlds (seven above and seven below) are contained within his belly (chaturdaśa-bhuvanāny asyodare). For the denizens of any of these worlds, the magnitude of such a god is beyond imagination.

The 'mahimā' mentioned here also includes 'vibhūti' (special and uncanny powers) and 'vistāra'

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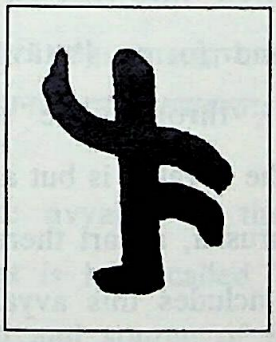
(spread, proliferation). The former accounts for his personal and unique capability (svakīya-sāmarthya-viśesha), while the latter speaks of his absolute freedom (svātantrya). Neither of these, however, can be spoken of as his own nature (sva-rūpa), which is much higher than these.



(2) अतो ज्यायान् च पुरुषः।

If this be the mind-boggling majesty of the Purusha, this is not the all of him; there is much more to him. His actual majesty or greatness is far more than this perceived power or glory. The word 'atah' (meaning 'relative to that', 'than that') refers to the Purusha's majesty, glory or power (mahimnātah) in being all of this existence and being the master of 'amṛtatva'. As said earlier, the Purusha's glory, majesty or greatness is not his real nature (svarūpa); it is only one aspect of his, an insignificant aspect at that. We no doubt wonder at this glorious creation of his, but we should not circumscribe our understanding of the Purusha with it. His real greatness transcends this creation.

Kaṭha-upanishat (3,11) has a mantra which indicates a hierachy: the unmanifest (avyakta) is higher

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than the source of creation (mahat); and the Purusha is higher than the unmanifest. There is nothing higher than this Purusha; it is indeed supreme, the highest:

महतः परमव्यक्तं अव्यक्तात्पुरुषः परः।
पुरुषान्न परं किञ्चित्सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः॥

The unmanifest is so called because names and forms are not articulated or differentiated therein. Phenomenal world is manifest: it is characterized by names and forms. It presents to us the glory of the Purusha. But what makes this possible is the prior condition of the initial urge or impulsion (metaphorically likened to the 'will'). This urge is in the nature of stress prior to explosion (sphoṭa); it is called 'mahat' (from 'maghash', 'to burst forth', 'to come up', 'to reveal itself'), which presupposes the unmanifest state (avyakta), altogether devoid not only of names and forms but also of the stress or urge. There can be no mahat without there being avyakta. In this sense, avyakta is spoken of as superior to mahat. But avyakta itself is what gets transformed into the world of names and forms ('etāvān asya mahimā'), through the stage of mahat. The avyakta is but an aspect of the Purusha, a part thereof. The Purusha includes this avyakta, but is not confined to it. The Purusha is in this sense superior to avyakta. And because the Purusha comprehends not only all phenomenal existence (idam), all that has been, all that is, and all that is going to be, but also

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whatever constitutes the source and substance of phenomenal existence (mahat and avyakta), he is the 'highest' (kāshṭhā). Nothing can possibly overreach him, or go beyond him.

The same idea is expressed in a mantra in *Muṇḍakopanishat* (2,1,5):

दिव्यो ह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः स बाह्याभ्यन्तरोऽह्यजः।
अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्रो ह्यक्षरात्परतः परः॥

The avyakta of the *Kaṭha-upanishat* is here called 'akshara': the seed and source of the world of names and forms, but undifferentiated as yet into names and forms (avyākṛta); and therefore indestructible and indecaying (akshara). It has life (prāṇa) and mind (manas) in a nascent state, albeit inarticulate and undirected. Beyond this unmanifest condition is the Purusha, absolutely devoid of form (amūrta) and settled in the realm above the earth and the midregion (divya) of him, origination cannot be indicated (ajah). He abides in the interior of all the things and beings of the manifest world, and also outside them. He is therefore the reality that is transcendental, while being at the same time immanent in creation.

Sāyaṇa paraphrases the idea: this phenomenal world is not the natural or ultimate condition of the Purusha ('na tu tasya vāstava-svarūpam'). To be above it, beyond it, distinct from it is his natural state. It is in this state that Brahman

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is said to be founded in his own glory ('sve mahimni pratishṭhitah').

(3) पादः अस्य विश्वा भूतानि। त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि॥

What was said cryptically in the latter half of the first line is here spelt out. All this greatness, glory or majesty of the Purusha in the form of this wonderful creation is not his real nature or natural condition ('na tu tasya vāstava-svarūpam', as Sāyaṇa says). In order to illustrate how the Purusha is infinitely greater than the greatness of the created world, the notion of the Purusha having four quarters (chatushpāttva) has been introduced as a cognitive construct. In the words of Sāyaṇa:

यद्यपि परब्रह्मण इयत्ताभावात् पादचतुष्टयं निरूपयितुमशक्यं तथापि जगदिदं ब्रह्मस्वरूपापेक्षया अल्पमिति विवक्षितत्वात् पादत्वोपन्यासः॥

It is not to be imagined that the Purusha has actually four quarters, or that his magnitude may be measured by devices such as these. 'Being four-quartered' (chatushpāttva) is only an as-if supposition. If we consider the Purusha as having four parts, all this majesty of creation is taken care of by but one of the parts; and the other three parts (the much greater part of the Purusha) are beyond the hold of the coördinates and dimensions of the created world; they abide high in the heavens, altogether inaccessible to us. The pāda-ideology has the function of showing us how insignificantly small the created world (which presents to us the glory of the Purusha) is, in contrast to the real nature of the Purusha.

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Pāda literally means an instrument of movement or progression ('padyate gamyate anena'), and refers primarily to the moving foot (charaṇa). The fourth part of a mantra in *Ṛgveda* is technically called a pāda (ṛk-pāda). This was the forerunner of the later convention of verses having four pādas. By extension, anything could be divided into four parts, each part thereof being known as a quarter. The three-quarters is a greater measure than a quarter; it is larger, more expansive, mightier ('jyāyān'). The pāda is but a part of the whole, an aṁśa or aspect. However, the pāda is to be considered here in the context of 'ati-rohati' of the preceding mantra, and 'vyakrāmat' of the following mantra, both expressions suggesting transcending and expanding. The three-quarters which transcend the one quarter constitute one aspect; and hence the expression 'tripāt'. Pāda in this sense means a 'foothold' for climbing, ascending, or transcending, or a stride that one takes to move around.

Vishṇu as 'tri-vikrama' (who took three strides) is a well-known image in *Ṛgveda*. Yāska explains (*Nirukta*, uttara-shaṭka, 12, 2, 8 (19)) that the word 'Vishṇu

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signifies entering into everything and pervading everything ('vishṇur viśater vā vyaśnoter vā, tasyaishā bhavati'). Durgāchārya points out that Vishṇu here means Sūrya whose rays of light enter into everything and pervade all over ('sūryo raśmibhih... vishṇur bhavati; yadāvishṭa pravishṭah, sarvato raśmibhih bhavati tadā vishṇur bhavati; vi-pūrvasya vāśnoteh, yadā raśmibhir atiśayenāyam vyāpto bhavati, vyāpnoti vā rasmibhir ayam sarvam, tadā vishṇur ādityo bhavati'). Yāska, cites in support of his explanation a mantra from *Ṛgveda* (1,22,17) which tells us that Vishṇu made three giant strides; and indicates the import of the mantra:

इदं विष्णुर्विचक्रमे त्रेधा निदधे पदम्।
समूळ्हमस्य पांसुरे॥

यदिदं किञ्च तद्विक्रमते विष्णुः। त्रिधा निधत्ते पदम्। त्रेधाभावाय पृथिव्यामन्तरिक्षे दिवीति शाकपूणिः। समारोहणे विष्णुपदे गयशिरसीत्यौर्णवाभः॥

This mantra visualized by Medhātithi-kāṇva, describes that the three divisions of all the space that is available were in fact made by Vishṇu (viz. Āditya) himself, and that he transcended these divisions (Durgāchārya: 'yadidam kimchid vibhāgena avasthitam tad vikramate vishṇur ādityah'). There are two interpretations by traditionalists: one by Śākapūṇi, who says that the three steps that Vishṇu took, according to the three divisions mentioned above, signify earth, mid-region and the sky; and another by Aurṇavābha, who says

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that the three steps refer to the Sun rising in the east, the Sun being on top at noon, and the Sun setting in the west. The glossator, Durgāchārya, identifies the three steps, according Śākapūṇi, with fire (agni) on earth, lightning (vidyut) in the mid-region and the sun (sūrya) in the sky. Whatever the interpretation, Vishṇu (or Āditya) transcends all these divisions.

There are several mantras in *Ṛgveda,* which speak of the three steps or divisions (e.g. 1,22,17 'idam vishṇur vichakrame tredhā', 1,22,18 'trīṇi padā vi chakrame', 10,7,10 'tredhā bhuve kam', 1,154,1, 'yah pārthivāni vi mame rajāmsi ...vichakramāṇas tredhorugāyah', 1,154,4 'yasya trī pūrṇā madhunā', 1,154,2 'yasyorushu trishu vikramaṇeshu', 1,154,3 'tribhir it padebhih' etc.). Vishṇu becomes a 'tripāt' having made these three strides, having transcended them by three steps. He encompassed everything, as the next mantra indicates ('vishvaṅg vyakrāmat'). Thus all the three divisions are in fact but one part (cf. 1,154, 3 'sadastham eko vimame tribhir it padebhih' and 1,154,4, 'eko dādhāra bhuvanāni viśvā').

Vishṇu's own realm is distinct from this one part (of three strides). It is called 'highest foothold' (1, 22, 20, 'tad vishṇoh paramam padam', 1, 154, 5 'vishṇoh pade parame') poetically termed the heavens (divi) or the world of immortality (amṛtasya loka). The

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transcending of the three realms is really a description of Vishṇu abiding in his own realm and illumining the wide expanse of the sky (cf. 9,17,5 'ati trī soma rochanā rohan na bhrājase divam'). But this is not to be construed as the fourth realm. Vishṇu's presence is indeed in all the three realms, but not confined to them, or restrained by them. In this sense, it is not mortal (martya). Present within the mortal creatures, it is immortal (amṛta). This is the real meaning of 'ati-rohaṇa'. It abides in its own glory and majesty ('sve mahimni'). Transcending each of the three realms is accomplished by having the visible and transactional aspect thereof as a foot-hold (pāda).

In reality, the transcending (atirohaṇa) is in terms of inward progression, a movement in the direction of the most interior reality (the antaryāmi). The earth contains within itself the midregion; and the mid-region contains within itself the sky. And abiding beyond this sky, but within its recesses, is the Purusha, which is the innermost reality. *Muṇḍaka-upanishad* (2,2,5) says:

यस्मिन् द्यौः पृथिवी चान्तरिक्षमोतं
मनः सह प्राणैश्च सर्वैः।
तमैवैकं जानथ आत्मानमन्या वाचो
विमुञ्चथ अमृतस्यैष सेतुः॥

"In the Purusha is contained the three realms, the heavens, the earth and the midregions, and the mind with all the vital currents which are all pervaded by the Purusha through and through. One should seek to know this, the self of all beings, and abandon all other pursuits".

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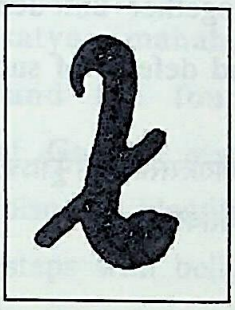

(4)

(संहितापाठः)

त्रिपादूर्ध्व उदैत्पुरुषः
पादोऽस्येहा भवत्पुनः।
ततो विष्वङ् व्यक्रामत्साशनानशने
अभि॥४॥

(पदपाठः)

त्रिऽपात्। ऊर्ध्वः। उत्। ऐत्।
पुरुषः। पादः। अस्य। इह।
अभवत्। पुन (रिति)।
ततः। विष्वङ्। वि। अक्रामत्।
साशनानशने इति। अभि॥

(अन्वयः)

त्रिपात् पुरुषः ऊर्ध्वं उदैत्। अस्य पादः
इह पुनः अभवत्।
ततः साशनानशने अभि विष्वङ् व्यक्रामत्॥

The Purusha who is described as 'three-quarters' or 'tripāt (because he transcended the three footholds or the three realms: earth, mid-region and sky) has gone up (above the three realms) in the sense that he abides in his own real nature, beyond the ken of mortals. Only the quarter-part of the Purusha appears before us as the world that is recurrent and transmigratory. From his own realm, he has pervaded all that exists here, the living and non-liging worlds, in diverse forms. This immense, wonderful and expansive universe of ours represents but a

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minor aspect of the Purusha's power, a small fragment (a pāda, quarter). The Purusha's real nature far exceeds this limit. We cannot fathom the entirety of his majesty; even the bulk of it is beyond our understanding.

(1) त्रिपादूर्ध्व उदैत्पुरुषः।

Sāyaṇa takes the descriptive epithet 'tripāt' as qualifying the Purusha (yo-yam tripāt - purushah), who is utterly devoid of the nature of the transmigratory world (samsāra-rahitah), and who is the absolute and unitary principle of consciousness-energy (brahma-svarūpah). He 'rose above' (ūrdhva udait) in the sense that the Brahman rests in his own glory, being outside this transmigratory world born out of nescience, and being altogether untouched by the merits and defects of such a world:

अस्मादज्ञानकार्यात्संसाराद्बहिर्भूतोऽत्रत्यैर्गुणदोषैरस्पृष्टः उत्कर्षेण स्थितवान्।

However, it is possible to take the expression 'tripāt' along with 'ūrdhva udait', thereby suggesting the meaning that the Purusha rose upwards, taking three steps (or making three strides), mentioned earlier, or with three-fourths of his power (mahimā, glory, majesty). The three steps or the three realms may variously be seen as the three higher worlds (mahah, janah and tapah), the three vyāhṛtis (bhūh, bhuvah and svah), the three states (wakefulness, dream and deep sleep), the three Vedas (ṛg, yajus and sāman) the three pādas of Gāyatri and so on; the Purusha's own realm is beyond the three

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realms; satya, mahah, turīya, praṇava and the fourth pāda (turīya) of Gayatri respectively. There is also an identification of the three steps with belly (udara), heart (hṛdaya) and the sky within (dahara); and going beyond them would be reaching sahasrāra, at a distance of 'ten aṅgulas'

There is another interpretation for 'udait': concealing his own transcendental nature which is devoid of any involvement with the transactional world, the Purusha entered into the heart of every creature as its very soul.

1) भूर्भुवः सुवरिति वा एनतास्तिस्रो व्याहृतयः। तासामुहस्मैतां चतुर्थीम्। महाचमस्यः प्रवेदयते। मह इति तद्ब्रह्म। स आत्मा अङ्गान्यन्या देवताः। भूरिति वा अयं लोकः। भुव इत्यन्तरिक्षम्। सुवरित्यसौ लोकः। मह इत्यादित्यः। आदित्येन वाव सर्वे लोका महीयन्ते॥ (तैत्तिरीयोपनिषदि १,४)॥

2) यद्वा त्रिपाच्छब्देन जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तानां ग्रहणं, तत ऊर्ध्वं उपरिभागे तुरीयायां उदैत् स्वोपलब्धिं प्राप्त इत्यर्थः॥

3) त्रिपादित्यनेन उदर हृदय दहराणां, तत ऊर्ध्वं उपरिभागे सहस्रारे पुरुष उदैत्।

4) निष्प्रपञ्चं पारमार्थिकं रूपमावृण्वन् स्वसृस्टान् प्राणिहृदयप्रदेशान् आविवेश आविष्टवान् जीवरूपेण॥ यथा तैत्तिरीयारण्यके "आत्मनाऽऽत्मानं विधाय तदेवानु प्राविशत्॥"

The three steps or quarters (tripāt) that move upwards in sequence suggest the upāsanā (devotional exercise) that is indicated. The individual transcends his lower nature and moving upto his higher nature, finds the Purusha as his own ātman in the deepest recesses of his own being. As *Taittirīya-āraṇyaka* (10, 12, 3) says:

परेण नाकं निहितं गुहायाम्॥

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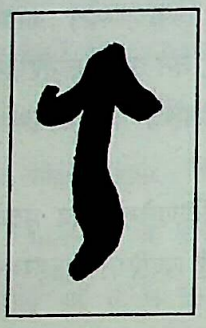

(2) पादोऽस्येहाभवत्पुनः॥

The significance of this sentence is that the entire universe is the expression of but one small aspect of the Purusha; and that it does not exhaust, or fully reveal the majesty and power of the Purusha. The word 'pāda' (literally one quarter or one step) means a small part (leśa), in contrast to the 'tripāt' which is transcendental. The pāda in this context refers to the transactional world which we are acquainted with; 'iha' (here) is to be taken to mean 'samsāre' (in this transmigratory world).

The pāda 'becoming again and again' (abhavat punah) refers to the constant changes (vikāra) that the world undergoes and to the phenomena of births and deaths that are cyclical in character (pade pade). There is a mantra in *Ṛgveda* (10, 190, 3) which speaks of the sun and the moon being created anew in every aeon as they were in the previous ones:

सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ धाता यथापूर्वमकल्पयत्।
दिवं च पृथिवीं चान्तरिक्षमथो स्वः॥

The part of the Purusha that is renewed repeatedly is also symbolized by the ritual fire that must be kindled every day in many hearths. We read about this in *Taittirīya-āraṇyaka* (3,14,11):

भर्ता सन् म्रियमाणो बिभर्ति। एको देवो बहुधा निविष्टः॥

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And in *Muṇḍaka-upanishad* (1,1,7) there is the image of the spider weaving its web, throwing out the threads from its own body and then withdrawing them into itself; plants grow out of the earth and get back into the earth; even so, from the imperishable Purusha the world comes out, and into him it returns:

यथोर्णनाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च
यथा पृथिव्यामोषधयः सम्भवन्ति।
यथा सतः पुरुषात्केशलोमानि
तथाऽक्षरात्सम्भवतीह विश्वम्॥

The Purusha with this one step (pāda) (tatah) strode across (vi akrāmat) in all directions (vishvaṅg). 'Vyakrāmat' (vi akrāmat) means took or placed steps (kramu pāda-vikshepe) in different directions (the prefix 'vi' being taken in the sense of 'vividha'), or in an especial manner ('vi' having the sense of 'viśesheṇa'). The word signifies pervasion (vyāpti).

The word 'vishvaṅg' literally means 'moves about in several places, or all over' (vividha-sthāneshu añjati gachchhati); and thus repeats the import of 'vyakrāmat'. The two words together signify the all-pervasive character of the Purusha or of his one step (sarvatra sarvatah vyāpta). This world of ours is pervaded through and through by the Purusha.

The world of human beings is said to be suffuced in its interior with the world of spirits (*Taittirīya-samhitā:* antarhito hi devaloko manushyalokāt').

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It must be noted that in the *Rgvedic* passages, the expression 'udait' is very frequently used in connection with Sūrya (e.g. 1, 50, 5; 1,124,1; 1,191,8; 3,15,2; 4,13,1; 5,54,10; 7,35,8; 7,60,1; 8,13,13; 8,27,19; 9,17,5; 10,35,8; 10,37,2; 10,88,6 etc.) , even as the expression 'vyakrāmat' (in its variant forms 'vichakrame' and so on) is used eulogizing Vishṇu (1,22, 16-18; 1,154,1; 4,18,11; 7,100, 3-4; 8,12,27; 8,52,3; 8,100,12 etc). And Vishṇu in the Vedic context is a form of Sūrya, especially the all-pervasive aspect of Sūrya. Yāska indicates why this is so (*Nirukta,* 12, 18):

विष्णुर्विशतेर्वा व्यश्नोतेर्वा तस्यैषा भवति॥

Durgāchārya explains:

यदा विषितः व्याप्तोऽयमेव सूर्यो रश्मिभिर्भवति तदा विष्णुर्भवति। विशतेर्वा यदा विष्टः प्रविष्टः सर्वतो रश्मिभिर्भवति तदा विष्णुर्भवति। व्यश्नोतेर्वा विपूर्वस्य वाश्नोते यदा रश्मिभिरतिशयेनायं व्याप्तो भवति व्याप्नोति वा रश्मिभिरयं सर्वं तदा विष्णुरादित्यो भवति॥

(4) साशनानशने अभि॥

The expression in dual number 'sāśanānaśane' is rather difficult to understand. It is a compound of two words 'sāśana' ('with aśana') and 'anaśana' ('without aśana'), and the word 'aśana' is of obscure significance in the present context. 'Aśana' normally means eating or food. And there is also the common expression 'aśanānaśana' which means eating and fasting. (cf. *Atharva-veda,* 19,6,2). But this meaning does not agree with the action of pervading all over,

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suggested by 'vishvaṅg vyakrāmat'. It has been suggested by Sāyaṇa that the words 'sāśana' and 'anaśana' mean living beings (chetana) and non-living things (achetana) respectively, thus comprehending the entirety of the world which is pervaded over by the Purusha. Rāghavendra-tīrtha, however, takes the words in the sense of sages and gods; alternately he suggests that the Purusha pervades the living as well as the inert world and abides as its controller ('chetanāchetane abhi vyāpya tan niyanṭrtayā').

It has also been suggested that day and night are meant here. Living creatures seek food when it dawns (cf. *Ṛgveda* 1, 124, 12); and dawn is the time when food is offered to the gods in ritual (1,113,12). References like Agni ruling by day and night (1,98,2; 1,127,5; 10,88,6) represent in fact Sūrya as a form of Agni.

The neuter dual 'sāśanāśane' is also said to have the import of 'sadhastha' (heaven and earth, dyāvā - pṛthivī) (cf. RV 10,17,6 'ubhe abhi priyatame sadhasthe', referring to Pūshan, a form of Sūrya). The expression 'sadhastha' is employed for Agni (cf. RV. 3, 6, 4 'mahānt sadhasthe dhruva ā') as he shines over the earth and the sky (cf. also RV. 6, 1, 11 and 6, 48, 6) and for Vishṇu (cf. RV, 1, 154, 1, 'askabhāyād uttaram sadhastham') as he strides over earth and heaven (cf. also RV 1,154,4). The meaning of the second line of the mantra may thus be that the Purusha pervades over

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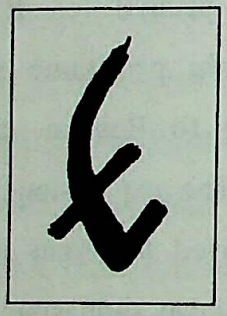
the entire world, the earth and the sky together. Heaven and earth also represent day and night; and Agni (or Sūrya) rules by day and night (1,98,2; 1,127,5 and 10,88,6) in the sense that he illumines both heaven and earth.



(5)

(संहितापाठः)

तस्माद्विराळजायत विराजो अधि पूरुषः।
स जातो अत्यरिच्यत पश्चाद् भूमिमथो पुरः॥५॥

(पदपाठः)

तस्मात्। विऽराट्। अजायत।
विऽराजः। अधि। पुरुषः।
सः। जातः। अति। अरिच्यत।
पश्चात्। भूमिं। अथो इति पुरः॥

(अन्वयः)

तस्मात् विराट् अजायत। विराजः अधि पुरुषः (अजायत)। सः जातः (एव) अत्यरिच्यत। पश्चात् भूमिं (ससर्ज)॥ or अथो पुरः (अपि) ससर्ज॥ सः जातः भूमिं पश्चात् अथो पुरः अत्यरिच्यत॥

The previous mantra declares that the Purusha pervaded this universe all over (vishvaṅg vyakrāmat). The present mantra elaborates on this theme. From that Purusha, who envelops all things (the sky and the earth together), and is transcendental, was brought forth the Virāj; and on the basis

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of this Virāj, the Purusha manifested himself. When he appeared, he overreached his own nature and became the immanent spirit in all creatures. The earth, then, came into existence and then the creatures; or, when he thus appeared, he overreached the earth, both in the West and in the East (viz. from behind and in front).

(1) तस्माद्विराळजायत। विराजो अधि पूरुषः।

Sāyaṇa takes 'tasmāt' (from him, or from that) as meaning 'ādi-purushāt' (from the primaeval Purusha), for there is mention of another Purusha, born out of the Virāj. From the primaeval Purusha came the Virāj, and from this Virāj the Purusha that is manifest in the transactional world came forth. Thus the Purusha and the Virāj are reciprocal in their origination (paraspara-utpādya-utpādaka-bhāva). The word Virāj needs some explanation.

The word is derived from the root 'rāja' (dīptau, meaning 'to shine', 'to reign', 'to rule', 'to govern', 'to excel'), and with the prefix 'vi' (meaning 'in an especial manner', viśesheṇa); it signifies that which is inordinately luminous and overreaching ('viśesheṇa rājate'). There is another sense in which the word is understood: 'vividhāni rājante vastūny atra', viz. that in which different kinds of things and beings shine or flash forth.

We have an explanation of the above mantra in *Vājasaneya-Samhitā - bhāshya,* which speaks of Virāj in terms of cosmic totality:

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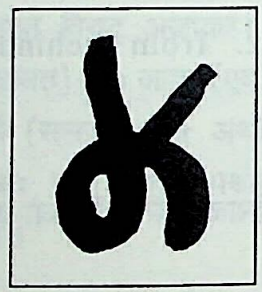
तस्मादादि पुरुषाद् विराड् ब्रह्माण्डदेहोऽजायत।
तमेव देहमधिकरणं कृत्वा पुरुषः तद्देहभिमानी
एक एव पुमानजायत।
सर्ववेदान्तवेद्यः परमात्मा स्वमायया विराड्देहं
ब्रह्माण्डरूपं सृष्ट्वा तत्र जीवरूपेण प्रविश्य
ब्रह्माण्डाभिमानी देवतात्मा जीवोऽभवदित्यर्थः॥

The cosmic totality (brahmāṇḍa-deha) mentioned here is in later thought (e.g. in *Brahma-vaivarta-purāṇa*, Prakṛti-khaṇḍa, chap.3) imagined to be the spatial stretch extending from the nethermost regions to the realm of Brahma (which is the highest within man's reach), beyond which is the high heavens (vaikuṇṭha), the Purusha's own majesty:

पातालाद् ब्रह्मलोकान्तं ब्रह्माण्डं परिकीर्तितम्।
अत ऊर्ध्वं च वैकुण्ठः॥

Further, this brahmāṇḍa is the grossest aspect of existence, grosser than the grossest, even as the ultimate atom is subtler than the subtlest. And this is the ground for countless worlds, the great primordial and pervasive space:

परमाणुर्यथा सूक्ष्मात्परः स्थूलात्तथाऽप्यसौ।
आधारोऽसंख्यविश्वानां महान् विष्णुश्च प्राकृतः॥



This cosmic totality is the body of the Purusha. As *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* (5,5,3) would have it, bhūh or earth is his head, bhuvah or the midregion is his arms, and svah or the sky is his feet (bhūriti śirah, bhuva iti bāhū, svar iti pratishṭhā). The Purusha is

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the soul of this body. With this body as the basis, the Purusha manifested himself. He appropriated the body as his own (dehābhimānī). The body emanated from himself owing to his own creative impulse (māyā). He takes the form of the soul (jīva). From this soul, space (ākāśa) came forth, from space wind (vāyu), from wind fire (agni), from fire water (āpah), from water earth (pṛthivī), from earth vegetation (oshadhayah), and from vegetation food (anna), and from food all creatures (*Taittirīya-upanishad,)*. The principle of such creative activity is technically known as Prajāpati. The primaeval Purusha became Prajāpati; and from Prajāpati the cosmic materialization called Virāj issued forth. We read in *Śatapatha - brāhmaṇa* (6,1,1,1 and 13, 2, 6, 3):

स एव पुरुषः प्रजापतिरभूत्। सोऽयं पुरुषः प्रजापतिरकामयत भूयान्तस्यां प्रजायेयेति॥ प्रजापतिर्विराजमसृजत। साऽस्मात्स्रष्टा पराच्यैत्॥

This Prajāpati who is ruler of all things, far and wide is in fact the creative principle, and is identified with Brahma, Agni, the Purusha and with Vishṇu. It is interesting that this is regarded as a feminine energy in *Atharva-veda* (8,10,1):

विराड् वा इदमग्र आसीत्तस्या जातायाः सर्वमबिभेदियमेवेदं भविष्यतीति॥

This is so even in *Taittirīya-samhitā* (3,3,5,2 'prajāpatir virājam

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apaśyat, tayā bhūtam...') and in *Śatapatha - brāhmaṇa* (13,2,6,3 'prajāpatir virājam asṛjata, sā asmāt sṛshṭā ...').

Virāj was what and all that existed in the beginning. When she appeared, there was fear that she would become the entire world. There is another reference in the same corpus (11, 8, 30), where it is said that the primaeval waters, the illumining elements and the Virāj occurred with Brahman, the creator, and that when Brahman entered the body (the material vestment for the spirit), he became the overlord, the Prajāpati.

या आपो याश्च देवता या विराड् ब्रह्मणा सह।
शरीरं ब्रह्म प्राविशत् शरीरेऽधि प्रजापतिः॥

Here Virāj is placed in a subordinate position to the absolute spirit Brahma, who as creator transformed himself as Prajāpati. Now this Prajāpati is himself the Purusha, not however the primaeval Purusha (ādi-purusha or Brahman), but the secondary Purusha, who emanated from Virāj (virājo adhi pūrushah), and who can be spoken of as the individual spirit (jīva) that enters into the body-mind complex. The difference is between Purusha as being and Purusha as subject. However, there is not a duality of purushas. We read in *Bhāgavata* (11,4,3) that the supreme and primordial Nārāyaṇa created the Virāj out of his own nature (in the form of the basic bricks of the material universe), and entered into the Virāj, when he came to be known as Purusha:

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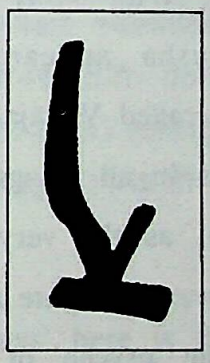
भूतैर्यदा पञ्चभिरात्मसृष्टैः पुरं
विराजं विरचय्य तस्मिन्।
स्वांशेन विष्टः पुरुषाभिधान-
मवाप नारायण आदिदेवः॥

There are aspects of Virāj, the cosmic totality, which enter into the formation of Purusha: the sun in the cosmos became the eyes of the individual, the air became the breath, and so on, so that the Purusha (the progeny of Virāj) is in reality the brahman (viz. the progenitor of Virāj) and all the gods (viz. the universal energies) are settled in it as cows in a cattle-shed. So we read in *Atharva-veda* (8,10,31 and 32):

सूर्यश्चक्षुर्वातः प्राणं पुरुषस्य वि भेजिरे।
अथास्येतरमात्मानं देवाः प्रायच्छन्नग्नये॥
तस्माद्वै विद्वान् पुरुषमिदं ब्रह्मेति मन्यते।
सर्वा ह्यस्मिन् देवता गावो गोष्ठ इवासते॥

Indeed, Prajāpati is himself Virāj, even as the earth, the midregion, the speech and the death are all aspects of Virāj (AV, 9,10,24):

वाग् विराड् पृथ्वी विराडन्तरिक्षं विराड् विराट् प्रजापतिः।
विराण् मृत्युः साध्यानामधिराजो बभूव॥



Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara while commenting on this hymn (occuring in *Taittirīya-āraṇyaka*, 3,12) provides a fresh insight into the concept of Purusha. The primaeval Purusha (called by Sāyaṇa ādi-

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purusha) is taken by Bhaṭṭa - Bhāskara as Nārāyaṇa, or praṇava (omkāra), described by some as the original unmanifest reality (avyakta). He is Mahā - purusha in the sense that he is distinguished by the pristine creative urge (maghash). The Virāj that proceeded from this source is Prajāpati. With Virāj as ground the Purusha appeared: he is therefore called Vairāja - purusha. He shines in all beings especially (vi-rājati), as the very light and life, as awareness pure and simple. This is the 'psyche' of all beings: in the words of Bhaṭṭa - Bhāskara, 'mānasīna - ātmā'. The totality of all the psyches is Prajāpati called Daśa-hotra, so called because he is characterized by ten details of the 'psyche': chitti (consciousness), chitta (reflection), vāk (speech), adhītā (recollection, attention), keta (desire, will, shape), vijñāta (discernment), vākpati (eloquence), manas (mind), prāṇa (vital current) and sāma (tranquillity), which are comparable to the sacrificial ladle (sruk), oblation (ājya), altar (vedi), the grass-seat (barhi), fire (agni), fire-kindler (agnidhra), the oblation - offering priest, (hotṛ), the impelling priest (upavaktṛ), the offering into fire (havis) and the chief priest (adhvaryu) respectively, in a sacrificial session. (cf. *Taittirīyāraṇyaka* 3,1):

चित्तिः स्रुक्। चित्तमाज्यम्। वाग्वेदिः। अधीतं बर्हिः। केतो अग्निः। विज्ञातमग्निघ्रम्। वाक्पतिर्होता। मन उपवक्ता। प्राणो हविः। सामाध्वर्युः॥

The former ten details are individual functions or psychic

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faculties (daśa śarīra-gatā padārtha-viśeshāh), while the latter are corresponding details necessary for the performance of a sacrificial ritual (homa-nishpādakāh). This is why Prajāpati is figuratively called 'daśa-hotrā' (the ten-fold sacrifice). Bhaṭṭa - Bhāskara's words are:

तस्मात् प्रणवाख्यात् नारायणात्। अव्यक्तादिति केचित्। तस्मात् प्रकृतान्महापुरुषात् विराडजयत प्रजापतिः। ततो विराजो अधि विराजमेवाधिकरणीकृत्य। पुरुषोऽजायत दशहोत्राख्यः प्रजापतिः पुरुषसमष्ट्यात्मनाऽजायत। यथोक्तं स मानसीन आत्मा जनानाम्॥

Bhaṭṭa - Bhāskara explains that the word 'atyarichyata' in the mantra signifies that the Purusha of his own accord let himself loose, and assumed multifarious forms that overreached his own original nature: he created the elements, the sense-faculties and so on. In this context, he cites a scriptural text (TB 2,2,9) to the effect that mind issued forth from the non-existent (viz. unmanifest) reality; and that the mind created Prajāpati, who in turn created all beings.

स वैराजः पुरुषः। जातः। प्रादुर्भावानन्तरं अत्यरिच्यत। स्वयमेव आत्मानं अत्यरेचयत्। अनेकधाभावलक्षणं स्वरूपातिरेकं अभजत। भूतेन्द्रियादीन्यसृजतेति यावत्। उक्तं च (तैत्तिरीयब्राह्मणे २,२.७) असतोऽधि मनोऽसृज्यत। मनः प्रजापतिमसृजत। प्रजापतिः प्रजा असृजतेति॥

'Manas' here is the 'psyche' in its latent and total, foundational and primordial aspects. It is the same as the Vairāja-purusha or Daśahotra-prajāpati. In other words, it is psychocosmic will (samkalpa or Kāma).

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(2) स जातोऽअत्यरिच्यत। पश्चाद्भूमिमथो पुरः॥

The significant word in this sentence is 'aty arichyata'. The root of the word is 'rich', which means 'to empty', to evacuate', 'to give up', 'to leave behind'. As the Purusha was 'born' (viz. as he manifested or revealed himself, 'jātah', janī prādurbhāve), he 'emptied himself', 'gave up' or 'left behind' (arichyata), Sāyaṇa paraphrases this expression as 'atiriktah abhūt' ('he became empty'), and explains that the Purusha assumed forms that were altogether different from Virāj, viz. the forms of gods, humans, beasts etc. (virāḍ vyatirikto deva-tiryaṅg - manushyādi - rūpah abhūt). Sāyaṇa's position follows Bhaṭṭa - Bhāskara's, which has already been indicated. That is to say, the Purusha gave up his original form; he sacrificed himself at the altar of creation. This self-sacrifice (ātma-yajña) is synonymous with the sacrifice of the Purusha (purusha-medha). As a result of this sacrifice, earth came into being, and then (atho) the bodies of all creatures.

Śāyaṇa's interpretation is that after the Purusha appeared in forms foreign to his own original nature, earth came into being. This was later than the formation of souls (jīvas) of the gods, humans etc.

When the earth as the field for the function of these souls came into being, the physical constitutions for these souls were brought about. These are called 'puras' here. Sāyaṇa means by

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'purah' bodies (śarīrāṇi), so called because they are filled by the seven - fold constituents ('pūryante saptabhir dhātubhih'), like blood, flesh, bone, marrow etc. The expression 'purah' may alternately mean, according to this line of thinking, 'pūrvam', meaning 'priorly', indicating that this refers to the first phase of the creative process (pūrva-sṛshṭi). The Ādi-purusha (described by Sāyaṇa as the Brahman who is the theme of all the Upanishads and the supreme spirit, 'sarva-vedānta-vedyah paramātmā') produced the Virāj (the cosmic body 'virāḍ-deham brahmāṇḍa-rūpam'), entered into it as its spirit ('sṛshṭvā tatra jīva-rupeṇa praviśya bṛahmāṇḍā bhimānī devatāmā jīvah abhavat'). The souls of beings were thus caused. After this (paśchāt, 'then' viz. after the causation of the souls 'devādi-jīva-bhāvād ūrdhvam'), earth was created ('bhūmim sasarja'). Then (atho, viz. after earth coming into being, 'bhūmi-sṛshṭer anantaram'), the bodies for those souls which had come into being earlier (teshām jīvānām purah) were created.

However, the prefix 'ati' added to the verb 'arichyata' modifies the meaning to a great extent: it connotes the sense of 'beyond' 'over', 'overpassed'. The import then would not be contained within the word 'atyarichyata', but would reach out to the words that follow: 'paśchād bhūmim atho purah'.

The expression 'paśchāt' not only means 'later', 'after', but also

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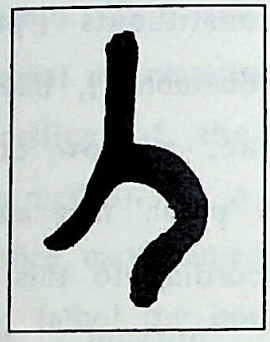
means 'from behind', 'in the rear', 'towards the west', even as 'purah' (purastāt) means not only 'prior to', at first' but also 'in front' 'forward', 'towards the east'. The words have a temporal as well as a spatial connotation. To go well with the meaning of 'aty arichyata', it is better that the latter is resorted to. The 'anvaya' would then be

सः जातः भूमिं पश्चात् अथो पुरः अत्यरिच्यत॥

When this Purusha (the Subject) appeared, he overpassed the earth from behind as well as in front (viz. in all directions). There is involved here a continuity and also a discontinuity: continuity of the Purusha as Being, and discontinuity of the Purusha as subject. Discontinuity may be looked upon as the sacrifice of continuity, but in fact there can be no subject without Being. Being is not abandoned in the subject. 'Purusha eva idam sarvam'.



(6)

(संहितापाठः)

यत्पुरु॑षेण ह॒विषा॑ दे॒वा
य॒ज्ञमत॑न्वत।
व॒स॒न्तो अ॑स्यासी॒दाज्यं॑ ग्री॒ष्म इ॒ध्मः
श॒रद्ध॒विः ॥६॥

(पदपाठः)

यत्। पुरु॑षेण। ह॒विषा॑। दे॒वाः।
य॒ज्ञं। अ॑तन्वत। व॒स॒न्तः। अ॒स्य॒।
आ॒सी॒त्। आज्यं॑। ग्री॒ष्मः। इ॒ध्मः।
श॒रत्। ह॒विः॥

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(अन्वयः)

यत् (यदा) देवाः पुरुषेण हविषा यज्ञमतन्वत, (तदा) वसन्तः आज्यमासीत्, ग्रीष्मः इध्मः (आसीत्), शरत् हविः (आसीत्)॥

When the Purusha overpassed the entire earth (as mentioned in the previous mantra), the devas (to be explained shortly) performed the sacrifice (also to be explained) with the Purusha himself as the ritual oblation. The sacrifice that was then performed had the spring season as the clarified butter to anoint, summer as the fuel to let the sacred fire burn, and antumn the oblations offered into it.

According to Sāyaṇa, if the previous mantras spoke of 'pūrva-sṛshṭi' or the prior phase of creation, with the present mantra begins an account of what is called 'uttara-sṛshṭi' or the latter phase of creation, the responsibility for which rests with the devas (who were brought into being during the prior phase of creation).

(1) यत् पुरुषेण हविषा देवा यज्ञमतन्वत।

The expression 'yat' is construed in the sense of 'yadā' signifying the time when the 'uttara-sṛshṭi' began. This is when the bodies or physical constitutions had been brought into being for the convenience of the souls (yadā pūrvokta - krameṇaiva śarīreshu utpanneshu satsu). Then the devas resolved to perform the sacrifice (yajña), which would accomplish the uttara-sṛshṭi.

Bhaṭṭa - Bhāskara comments (*Taittirīya-āraṇyaka,* 3,12):

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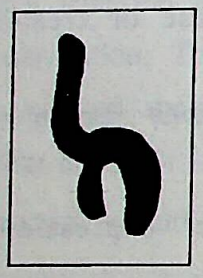
यत् यदा। पुरुषेण प्रजापतिना। हविषा हविष्ट्वेन संकल्पितेन। हविरन्तरस्य अभावात्। देवाः प्राणाः प्राजापत्याः इन्द्रियाणि च। यज्ञं संकल्पात्मकं। अतन्वत यज्ञमिव अकुर्वत॥



The yajña that was undertaken at the beginning of the secondary creation was in the nature of 'willing' (samkalpa). In fact, Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara clarifies that it was 'like a yajña' (yajñam iva). The Vairāja - purusha, as explained earlier, is the 'psyche' of all beings (mānasīna ātmā). It was this Psyche that brought into being all the 'devas'. The devas are so called because they shine themselves, illumine other things, abide in the luminous space, or give gifts (*Nirukta*, 7,15 'devo dānād vā dīpanād vā dyotanād vā '). Bhaṭṭa - Bhāskara suggests that the devas here symbolize the life-currents (prāṇas), the modes of the psyches (prājāpatyas) and the sense - faculties (indriyas) of the creator. What is the kind of sacrifice they are capable of? It can only be ādhyātmika.

Sāyaṇa continues the trend of thought and elaborates:

यत् यदा। पूर्वोक्तक्रमेणैव शरीरेषूत्पन्नेषु। देवाः। उत्तरसृष्टिसिद्ध्यर्थं। बाह्यद्रव्यस्य अनुत्पन्नत्वेन हविरन्तराभावात् पुरुषस्वरूपमेव मनसा हविष्ट्वेन संकल्प्य। पुरुषेण पुरुषाख्येन। हविषा। मानसं यज्ञम्। अतन्वत अन्वतिष्ठन्॥

The devas performed the yajña mentally. They resolved in their minds that the nature of the

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Purusha (the totality of psyches) was itself the material with which to accomplish the yajña. That was the only detail in existence at that time; there was then nothing else which could be an offering or oblation. That is to say, the life-currents and sense-functions that were let loose by the Psyche, began to function by obscuring the Psyche itself: they were outward in their orientation and turned their back to the internal reality. This is the yajña or sacrifice of the Purusha. It is as if the Purusha gave himself up to the devas. We read thus in *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (11,1,8,2): The devas were created in the image of the Purusha (or Prajāpati); this creation itself is called the sacrifice, for the Purusha gave himself up to the devas. Such is Purusha's (Prajāpati's) yajña:

अथ देवाः। अथैतमात्मनः प्रतिमानसृजत यद्यज्ञम्। तस्मादाहुः प्रजापतेर्यज्ञ इति। स देवेभ्य आत्मानं प्रदाय...।

This was because the Purusha himself was of the nature of yajña.

The symbolism of yajña has been detailed in a passage from *Taittirīya-brāhmaṇa* (2,2,1,1 and 2). This account is meant to explain how Purusha-Prajāpati came to be called Daśa-hotṛ (as mentioned earlier). Prajāpati resolved to bring forth all creatures, and at once perceived the daśa-hotṛ-mantra. He realized the import of this mantra and offered it as an oblation at the altar. The creatures were thus brought into being. But they at once struggled to get away. Prajāpati thereupon restrained them with the holding power of the

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mantra. He thus became daśa-hotṛ. Prajāpati (as being) is himself all the creatures (as subject). The creatures, however, are manifest, while Prajāpati is unmanifest. The oblation that he offered in order to transform himself from the unmanifest state to the manifest was only mental. For Prajāpati is the Psyche. The unmanifest Psyche is perfection and totality (pūrṇa), while the creatures that became manifest are distinguished by imperfection and segmentation (nyūna). The latter needs to move in the direction of the former. This is the significance of yajña (sacrifice): the Subject realizing the Being.

प्रजापतिरकामयत प्रजाः सृजेयेति। स एतं दशहोतारमपश्यत्। तं मनसाऽनुद्रुत्य दर्भस्तम्बे ऽ जुहोत्। ततो वै स प्रजा असृजत। ता अस्मात्सृष्टा अपाक्रामन्। ता ग्रहेणागृह्णात्॥

प्रजापतिर्दशहोता। प्रजापतिरेव भूत्वा प्रजायते। मनसा जुहोति। मन इव हि प्रजापतिः। प्रजापतेराप्त्यै पूर्णया जुहोति। पूर्ण इव हि प्रजापतिः। प्रजापतेराप्त्यै न्यूनया जुहोति। न्यूनाद्धि प्रजापतिः प्रजा असृजत प्रजानां सृष्ट्यै॥

Later, the same text (2,24) explains that when Prajāpati perceived the daśa-hotṛ - mantra, he fragmented himself into ten aspects (chitti, chitta etc.), and by tapas created all the beings:

स एतं दशहोतारमपश्यत्। तेन दशधाऽत्मानं विधाय दशहोत्राऽतप्यत॥

What now are these ten aspects that were brought into

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being as details of the yajña? There is another interesting dimension to the idea of the character, daśa-hotṛ, for Prajāpati: (1) as the brāhmaṇa, given to austerity (tapas); (2) as two-fold fire or Agni or yajña of two kinds (pāka-yajña and havir-yajña); (3) as earth or pṛthvī, which is the three-fold ground (for fire, food and rituals); (4) as the mid-region or antariksha, which establishes the world in four ways (sound, rains, quarters and space); (5) as prāṇa in five forms (prāṇa, apāna, samāna, udāna and vyāna); (6) as moon or chandramā who sustains the world in six seasons; (7) as food or anna which supports in seven vital functions; (8) as the sky or dyauh, which causes happiness by eight (five sense functions and three internal organs); (9) as the sun or āditya, who works with the above eight, adding his own brilliance, so that the worlds are illumined; and (10) Prajāpati who manifests himself in all the nine ways mentioned above, and yet remains in his own transcendental nature.

The symbolic character of yajña is thus made explicit.

(2) अस्य वसन्तो आज्यमासीत्। ग्रीष्म इध्मः। शरत् हविः॥

If the devas engaged themselves in a yajña, where the Purusha (the progenitor of the devas) himself served as the sacrificial offering, the yajña is of cosmic significance. *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (11,1,6,7) has this passage: 'Then in the year, the

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Purusha occurred; he was Prajāpati':

ततः संवत्सरे पुरुषः समभवत्। स प्रजापतिः॥

This year, who was Prajāpati, was indeed the sacrifice (11,1,1,1):

संवत्सरो वै यज्ञः प्रजापतिः॥

The year and the sacrifice are here identified; and the two again are identified with the Purusha. According to *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (8,4,1,22) 'it is the year in which all creatures are established' ('samvatsaro hi sarveshām bhūtānām pratishṭhā'), as they are in the sacrifice and in the Purusha. The year is spoken of as Agni (ibid. 8,4,2,16, 'samvatsaro vai agnir vaiśvānarah'), and as Āditya the lord of all seasons ('ādityastv eva sarvartavah'). The year is the sacrificer, and the seasons help him ('samvatsaro yajamānah, tam ṛtavo yājayanti'). The spring season (vasanta) is the kindler of the sacrificed fire (agnīdhra), the summer season (grīshma) is the chief fire-tender (adhvaryu); the rainy season is the songster (udgātṛ); and the autumnal season is the master of ceremonies (brahmā) (ibid. 11,2,3,32). The same text (11,2,7,1-5) speaks of the very year as the sacrifice (samvatsaro yajñah), with the seasons as the officiating priests (ṛtava ṛtvijah); the months are in the nature of oblations that are offered in the sacrifice (māsā havīṁshi); the half-months or fortnights are the vessels in which the oblations are placed (ardhamāsā

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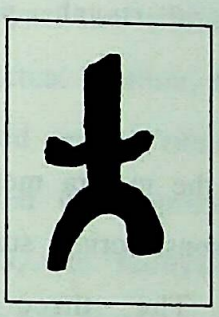
havish-pātrāṇi) and the day-and-night the ritualistic coverings (aho-rātre pariveshṭrī).

The three constituent details of a sacrifice which also provide fulfilment are 'ājya' (the melted or clarified butter which makes the fire flare up and burn brightly) 'idhma' (fuel that keeps the sacrificial fire burning) and 'havis' (whatever is poured into the fire as devotional offering or oblation like puroḍāśa cakes). The mantra under consideration enumerates but three seasons: spring (vasanta), summer (grīshma) and autumn (śarat), to symbolize these three constituents of the sacrifice, in that order. Normally a season consists of two months, and in a year therefore there are six seasons.



Śatapatha-brāhamaṇa (2,2,3-9) enumerates five seasons as the phases of Āditya during the day. When the sun rises, it is spring (vasanta). When in the forenoon the cattle are despatched for grazing, it is summer (grīshma). When it is midday, it is the rainy season (varshā). When it as afternoon, it is autumn (śarat). And when the sun sets, it is winter (hemanta). The number five appears ritualistically significant. As the text (6,1,2,18) says, the seasons are five and the rows of the fire-altar (agni-chiti) are also five

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('pañcha vā ṛtavah, pañchaitāś chitayah').

But the mantra mentions but three seasons: spring, summer and autumn. The three seasons represent the three gods (ibid., 7,2,4,26)

देवेभ्यस्त्रियुगं पुरेत्यृत्रवो वै देवास्तेभ्य एतास्त्रिः पुरा जायन्ते... ॥

The three seasons are therefore prescribed as suitable for the performance of sacrificial rituals. Vasanta consists of two months, Chaitra and Vaiśākha, Grīshma of Jyeshṭha and Āshāḍha, and Śarat of Kārtika and Mārgaśira. These are the most propitious months for sacrificial purposes, according to *Taittirīya-samhitā* (4,4,11,1): for the brāhmaṇa vasanta, for the rājanya grīshma, and for the vaiśya śarat (cf. *Taittirīya-brāhmaṇa,* 1,1,2,6 etc.).

Alternately, the three seasons named here symbolize the three periods during the day which are suitable for ritual offerings (savana). The spiring season is the fore-noon (pūrvāhṇa); that is when the sun (representng the Purusha or Agni) rises up. The summer time is noon, when the scorching sun dries up all things. The autumnal period is represented by the eventide or midnight. These are the three ritual-periods: prātah-savana, mādhyandina-savana and sāyam-savana.

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(7)

(संहितापाठः)

तं य॒ज्ञं ब॒र्हिषि॒ प्रौक्ष॒न् पुरु॑षं
जा॒तम॑ग्रतः।
तेन॑ दे॒वा अय॑जन्त सा॒ध्या
ऋष॑यश्च॒ ये॥२॥

(पदपाठः)

तम्।य॒ज्ञम्। ब॒र्हिषि॑। प्र। औ॒क्ष॒न्।
पुरु॑षं। जा॒तम्। अ॒ग्र॒तः।
तेन॑। दे॒वाः। अ॒य॒ज॒न्त॒। सा॒ध्याः।
ऋष॑यः। च॒। ये॥

(अन्वयः)

अग्रतः जातं तं यज्ञं पुरुषं बर्हिषि प्रौक्षन्। तेन ये देवाः साध्याः ऋषयः च (ते) अयजन्त॥

The devas, being responsible for uttara-sṛshṭi, began the yajña in which the primaeval Purusha (the progenitor of the devas) himself was the ritual oblation. Prior to actual oblation, the Purusha was placed on the ritual seat and consecrated or besprinkled. Then the devas, the sādhyas, and the ṛshis offered him as oblation.

(1) तं यज्ञं पुरुषं अग्रतः जातं बर्हिषु प्रौक्षन्।

The Purusha is here described as one who took shape (jātam) at the very beginning (agre) of the creative activity, and is identified with sacrifice (yajña). Sāyaṇa, however, takes the expression 'yajña' in the first line of the mantra in the sense of 'yajña-sādhana-bhūta', that which serves as the means of accomplishing the sacrifice, viz. the sacrificial animal (paśu). His approach being adhi-yajña, it naturally occurs to him that the animal to be sacrificed

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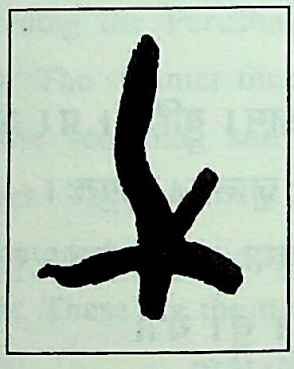
must be procured even prior to the commencement of the yajña, secured to the sacrificial post (yūpa), and sprinkled with water for consecration. The words 'agratah jātam', and 'barhishi praukshat', according to him, agree with 'yajñam' taken in the sense of the animal meant to be sacrificed ('paśutva-bhāvanayā yūpe baddham').

The word 'barhi' also has an adhi-yajña orientation. The articles used in the yajña (implements, vessels or the sacrificial animal) must be placed only on straw-mats in three layers (technically called 'trivṛt-barhi'; the grass for this purpose (darbha) is cut to prescribed size; and the three layers are meant to represent mother, father and son ('tri-vṛt - bhavati; mātā pitā putrah'). On such a seat, duly consecrated, the animal to be sacrificed (in this case, the Purusha), who had appeared even before the devas took shape ('agre jātam'), was placed and besprinkled (praukshan).



However, the sense of 'yajña-sādhana-bhūta' for 'yajña' appears rather unwarranted. The previous mantra identifies the Purusha (the Vairāja-purusha) with yajña; and in *Ṛgveda* the word yajña is often synonymous with Vishṇu. And yajña in the Ṛgvedic context does

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not always mean the ritual that we find in *Yajurveda.* Derived from the root 'yaja' (yajati), it signifies only devotion, adoration, honouring, offering of prayers; and not necessarily sacrifice. For instance, in RV (3,30,15), the worshipper himself is called a yajña.

इन्द्र दृह्य यामकोशा अभूवन् यज्ञाय
शिक्ष गृणतो सखिभ्यः।

More interesting is the play on the word 'yajña' a little later (3,32,12):

यज्ञेन यज्ञमव यज्ञियः सन् यज्ञस्ते
वज्रमहिहत्य आवत्।

Indra, who is worthy of worship and honour (yajñiya) is invoked to protect (ava) the worshipper (yajñam) by means of the very devotion that the worshipper has (yajñena); it is this devotion of the worshipper that protects the adamantine weapon of Indra (yajñah te vajram avat). Sāyaṇa himself takes the word 'yajñam' here in the sense indicated above ('yajñam yajñasya kartāram yajamānam'). And the well-known mantra, the last in this very sūkta (10, 90, 16), means by 'yajña' Vishṇu, and by 'yajñena' "by devotion":

यज्ञेन यज्ञमयजन्त देवाः।

There is no suggestion of a sacrifice or a cermonial ritual in such references. And Sāyaṇa also concedes that the yajña mentioned in this mantra is 'mānasa' in character ('ayajanta mānasa-yāgam nishpāditavanta ity arthah')

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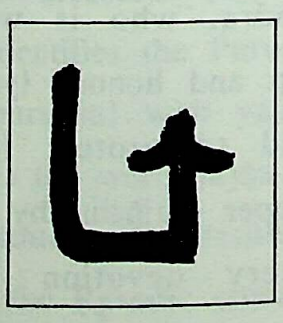
Interesting also in this connection to read *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (13,2,7,13ft), where Agni, Vāyu and Sūrya are described as sacrificial animals (paśu). And we have seen that the Purusha, whom the devas sacrificed, according to this mantra, is identical with Agni and Sūrya. The ideology of a sacrifice (yajña) thus gets a different flavour altogether. *Nirukta* (12, 41) paraphrases the words of the mantra as follows:

अग्निना अग्निमयजन्त देवाः।

(2) तेन देवा अयजन्त

With that Purusha, who is the spirit of sacrifice (yajña) or sacrifice incarnate (yajña-purusha), as the sacrificial object the gods performed the sacrifice. The sacrifice needs the performers; and they were the devas; it needs the material that is to be sacrificed, and that was the Purusha. The devas, by definition the shining, ones, the illumining agents, the gifting spirits, and the denizens of the sky ('devo dānād vā dīpanād vā dyotanād vā dyus-sthānād vā'). The sacrifice that they performed was only in the mind (Sāyaṇa: 'mānasa-yāgam nishpāditavantah'). As mentioned earlier, the devas represent only the vital currents (prāṇa) of the creator, Prajāpati (Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara's interpretation). They are the sense-organs and mind, which are lights in all our transactions.



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The earliest among these devas are designated as the 'sādhyas'. The expression 'sādhya' means 'to be accomplished', 'to be mastered or managed'; It is derived from the root 'sādha' which signifies accomplishment ('rādha sādha samsiddhau', with ṇyat-pratyaya). They are to be conjured up in order to accomplish. In later thought, they were regarded as a class of beings dwelling in the mid-region (bhuvar-loka), above the earth but below the sky; their number was also twelve, or seventeen. But in the mantra above, the sādhyas are taken to mean the energies that render possible the accomplishment of ones own intended actions (Skanda-svāmin, 'rasāharaṇādikam sva-vyāpāram sādhnuvanti samsiddham kurvanti'). In the earlier Nirukta-texts, the word sādhya was included under words signifying sun's rays ('nairukta-pakshe raśmayah'). Hence Skanda-svāmin mentions drying up the earth (rasā-haraṇādikam) as a function of the sādhyas.

Bhhaṭṭa - Bhāskara takes 'sādhyas' and 'ṛshis' as the two classes of the devas, who performed the sacrifice ('ke te devāh? sādhyaś cha ṛshayaś cha dvi-prakārā api devāh ayajanta'). The sādhyas are said to be the earliest ones among devas to take shape (*Nirukta*, 12, 41 'pūrvam deva-yugam ity ākhyānam'). *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* (1,16), however, regards them as solar in character and instrumental (to the

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conduct of sacrificial rituals) in nature; they are accomplishers of actions.

आदित्या आङ्गिरसाश्च साध्या देवा उच्यन्ते। साध्या देवाः साधनाश्छन्दोऽभिमानिनः। यज्ञादिसाधनवन्तः कर्मदेवताः॥

It is significant that *Bṛhaddevatā* (1,116 and 2,12) includes the sādhyas, along with āptyas, vasus and viśvedevas, in the group of gods belonging to the realm of Āditya. The same text (7, 143) mentions that Prajāpati, the creator, desirous of creating all beings performed the three-year sattra with the help of sādhyas and viśvedevas. Sāyaṇa follows this suggestion and describes sādhyas as capable of accomplishing creation, viz. Prajāpati and others ('sṛshṭi - sādhana - yogyāh prajāpati - prabhṛtayah'). However, the sādhyas here mean only the energies of Prajāpati (indriya and prāṇa). *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (10,2,2,3) states explicitly that the sādhyas are but prāṇas, which were instrumental in the accomplishment of creation at the very beginning.

प्राणा वै साध्या देवास्त एतमग्र एवमसाधयन् एतदेव बुभूषंतस्त उ एवाप्येतर्हि साधयन्ति॥

They were within the body of Prajāpati, and contributed immortality (amṛtatva) and purity (śuddhi), which were necessary for all creation. Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara also takes sādhyas to mean only prāṇas, which accomplish all things (*Taittirīya-āraṇyaka*, 3,12 'sādhayantī ti sādhyāh, prāṇāh'). It is because of the sādhyas that Prajāpati was able to create; and

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they made him 'sādhya'. *Taittirīya-samhitā* (6,3,5,1) says that at the beginning of creation, there was nothing that was active, apart from the sādhyas; and that they sacrificed Agni (viz. the Purusha-prajāpati or Virāj) in Agni and for Agni. All creation proceeded from this.

साध्या वै देवा आस्मिन् लोक आसन्। नान्यत् किञ्चन मिषत्। तेऽग्निमेवाग्नये मेधयालभन्त। न ह्यन्यदालंभ्यमविन्दन्। ततो वै इमाः प्रजाः प्रजायन्त। यदग्नावग्निं मथित्वा प्रहरति प्रजानां प्रजननाय॥

Chhāndogya-upanishad (3,10,2) specifies that these are the forms of energy within the solar orb.

The expression 'ṛshayah' is almost synonymous with the word 'sādhyāh'. The word ordinarily means the sages, seers, or the wise ones (from ṛsha 'gatau', the gatyar thaka-dhātu taken in the sense of jñānārthaka), or from 'dṛś ', 'to see', 'ṛshayah drashṭārah', *Uṇādi, 4,116).* They signify the sense-functions, which apprehend (indriyāṇi). Sāyaṇa takes ṛshayah as seers of mantras who help the sādhyas ('tad-anukūlā ṛshayah mantra-drashṭārah'). According to *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (6,1,1,1), however, the 'ṛshayah' mean 'prāṇāh' ('prāṇā vā ṛshayah'); but this is distinguished from the sādhyas by the involvement of 'tapas'.

The following excerpts from *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (6,1,1,1-5) helps us understand the role of prāṇas in the creative process:

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(१) असद्वा इदमग्र आसीत्। तदाहुः, किं तदसत् यदासीत्? इति। ऋषयो वाव तेऽग्रेऽसदासीत्। तदाहुः, के ते ऋषयः? इति। प्राणा वा ऋषयः। ते यत्पुराऽस्मात् सर्वस्मात् इदमिच्छन्तः श्रमेण तपसा रिषंस्तस्मादृषयः॥

In the beginning, the non-existent (viz. unmanifest) alone was there. What indeed was this non-existent? The ṛshis verily were that. They were in the beginning as non-existent. Who then were these ṛshis? The vital currents or energies are the ṛshis. They were the ones who wore themselves out (rishan) by effort (śrama) and austerity (tapas). They are called ṛshis because of this.

(२) योऽयं मध्ये प्राणः एष एवेन्द्रः। तानेष प्राणान्मध्यत इन्द्रियेणैंद्धयत्। यदैंद्धस्तस्मादिंद्ध इन्धो ह वै तमिन्द्र इत्याचक्षते परोक्षम्। परोक्षकामा हि देवास्त इद्धाः सप्त नानापुरुषानसृजन्त॥

That which was in the centre (or midst) of these vital currents (viz. the chief vital current, mukhya-prāṇa) is verily like Indra.

It was called Indra, because it activates (inddhayat) all other vital currents from where it is, by its extraordinary power (indriyeṇa, by its energy); it makes them all alive. Indra is its hidden name. Thus seven purushas came into being from the (seven) vital currents.

(३) ते ऽ ब्रुवन्। न वा इत्त्थं सन्तः तक्ष्यामः प्रजनयितुम्। इमान्त्सप्त पुरुषानेकं करवामेति। त एतान्त्सप्त पुरुषानेकं पुरुषमकुर्वन्। यदूर्ध्वं नाभेः तौ द्वौ, समौ ब्जन्यदर्वाङ् नाभेस्तौ द्वौ पक्षः पुरुषः पक्षपुरुषः प्रतिष्ठैक आसीत्॥

Then the seven vital currents deliberated: "We can not create, with the purushas being like this

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(viz. multiple and disparate). Let us make one purusha out of these seven". Then they fashioned one purusha out of the seven. From above the navel (nābhi), two purushas were accommodated, two more below the nave; and two purushas were located at the sides (paksha). And the remaining purusha was to serve as the very foundation (pratishṭhā) for the other six.

(४) अथ यैताषाः सप्तानां पुरुषाणां श्रीः यो रस आसीत्तमूर्ध्वं समुदौहंस्तदस्य शिरोऽभवत्। यच्छ्रियः समुदौहंस्तस्माच्छिरस्मस्मिन्नेतस्मिन् प्राणा आश्रयन्त तस्माद्वैतच्छिरः। अथ यत्प्राणा आश्रयन्त तस्मादु प्राणाः श्रियोऽथ यत्सर्वस्मिन्नश्रयन्त तस्मादु शरीरम्॥

Whatever now was the wealth and glory (śrīh) and essence (rasa) of each of the seven purushas, was gathered upwards, and that became the head (śirah); and all the vital currents sought refuge in this part. The body is thus known as 'locus of all' (śarīra).

(४) स एव पुरुषः प्रजापतिरभवत्। स यः स पुरुषः प्रजापतिरभवदयमेव स योऽयमग्निश्चीयते॥

This composite purusha became the Prajāpati, the creator and protector of all beings; and it is this Prajāpati that is Agni, who presides over the sacrificial rites.

(५) यान्वै तान्त्सप्तपुरुषानेकं पुरुषमकुर्वन्त्स प्रजापतिरभवत्स प्रजा असृजत। स प्रजाः सृष्ट्वोऽर्ध्व उदक्रामत्। स एतं लोकमगच्छद्यत्रैष एतत्तपति। नो ह तर्ह्यन्य एतस्मादत्र यज्ञिय आस तं यज्ञेनैव यष्टुमध्रियन्त॥ (१०,२,२,१)

This Prajāpati (who was composed of the seven purushas) then created all beings. Having created all beings, he went upwards and ascended into the

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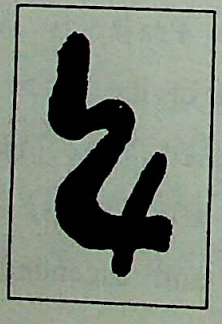
realm of the sun. Then there was nothing here that could be sacrificed; the gods, therefore, brought down this Prajāpati and made him the sacrificial object. (10,2,21)

(७) तस्मादेतदृषिभ्यनूक्तम् 'यज्ञेन यज्ञमयजन्त देवा' इति॥

It is for this reason that it has been said by the seers: 'the gods performed the yajña (viz. sacrifice) by the yajña (viz. the purusha or Prajāpati'), One who presides over the sacrifice is Agni, and the Purusha or Prajāpati also is Agni (cf. 'agninā agnim ayajanta devāh' *Nirukta* 12,41).



(8)

(संहितापाठः)

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुतः संभृतं
पृषदाज्यम्। पशून्तांश्चक्रे
वायव्यानारण्यान्ग्राम्याश्च ये॥७॥

(पदपाठः)

तस्मात्।यज्ञात्। सर्वऽहुतः।
संऽभृतम्। पृषत्ऽआज्यम्।
पशून्। तान्। चक्रे। वायव्यान्।
आरण्यान्। ग्राम्याः। च। ये॥

(अन्वयः)

सर्वहुतः तस्मात् यज्ञात् पृषदाज्यं संभृतम्। वायव्यान् आरण्यान् ये च ग्राम्याः तान् पशून् चक्रे॥

From this yajña, where everything was sacrificed, was collected speckled or clotted butter; and all the birds and the beasts,

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wild as well as domesticated, were made.

(1) तस्मात् यज्ञात् सर्वहुतः।

That sacrifice in which the Purusha who symbolizes the totality of existence is sacrificed is known as 'sarva-hut' or 'sarva-medha', also 'purusha-medha' ('sarvātmakah purusho yasmin yajñe hūyate, soyam sarva-hut'). This sacrifice is again mental in character (mānasād yajñāt). However, according to *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa,* this is a ten-day sacrificial session (13, 7, 1, 2 'sa vā sarva-medho daśa-rātro yajña-kratur bhavati'), the last day being the occasion for the comprehensive 'viśva-jid-ati-rātra' rite, the benefit of which is the obtainment of all things one desires ('sarvasyāptyai'). The ritual on the seventh day (āptoryāma) is also important, for it is then that everything is sacrificed: all the gods visualized by the creator as well as all things connected with them, living or non-living (ātma-devatyāh), thus answering to the designation of 'sarva-hut' or 'sarva-homa' (comm. on *Vājasaneya-samhitā,* 32,1). We read *in Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (13,7,1,9):

सर्वं जुहोति सर्वस्मै जुहोति सर्वस्याप्त्यै सर्वस्यावरुद्ध्यै॥

The same text provides the background information (13,7,1,1,): Brahma, (viz. the Purusha or Prajāpati), self-born, engaged himself in austerity (viz.

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in deep contemplation), and realized after a while that mere austerity was of little use. He then deliberated 'I shall offer my own self as sacrificial oblation in all beings, and receive all beings in myself as sacrificial oblation'. He did this, and as a result of this reciprocal sacrifice (in deliberation), he attained superiority over all beings, self-sufficience and mastery over all the worlds.

ब्रह्म वै स्वयम्भु तपोऽतप्यत। तदैक्षत-'न वै तपस्यानन्त्यमस्ति। हन्ताहं भूतेष्वात्मानं जुहवानि। भूतानि चात्मनि।' इति। तत्सर्वेषु भूतेष्वात्मानः हुत्वा भूतानि चात्मानि, सर्वेषां भूतानां श्रैष्ठ्यं स्वाराज्यमाधिपत्यं पर्यैत्। तथैवैतद् यजमानः सर्वमेधे सर्वान् मेधान् हुत्वा सर्वाणि भूतानि श्रैष्ठ्यं स्वाराज्यमाधिपत्यं पर्येति॥

What the significance of the expression 'all beings' (sarva) in the context of sacrifice is indicated in *Vājasaneya-samhitā* (32,1 ff). It may be recalled that *Purusha-sūkta* occurs in this version of *Yajur-veda*, and the mantra under consideration is the sixth mantra in the thirty-first chapter (virāḍ-anushṭup-chhandas). Immediately after the sūkta (which here has twenty-two mantras), there is an explanation as to what this 'all - sacrifice' is about: (32, 1-16). The Purusha or Prajāpati who is sacrificed is all this: Agni, Āditya, Vāyu, Chandra, the bright Brahma, the primaeval waters. All the gods are contained within the body of Prajāpati. They are all like oblations into the one spirit, Agni or Purusha (sarvam juhoti). This is how he becomes 'All' (sarva). The gods are only special manifestations or aspects of this one Purusha. Time,

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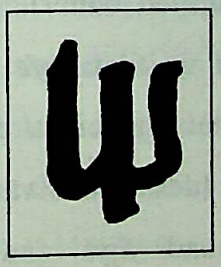
which is the chief principle in creation, is in fact an offspring of this Purusha. Who can comprehend him, grasp him in ones own understanding? He cannot be grasped on top, in the bottom, or in the middle. He is undifferentiated in space. Both space and time evolved out of him, at his will. He is the lone reality, and there can be nothing else that is equal to him in might or majesty. He is described as the 'golden womb' (hiraṇya-garbha), the all-real, and nothing is apart from him ('yasmān na jātah parah'). He is the inner controller of all beings. He is the very core of all existence, existing prior to the existence that spread in space and time. He pervades all outer space, and abides in the innermost space of living beings. He it is that makes all development in the past, in the present and in future possible; he is in the forefront of all creatures (ibid; 1-4):

तदेवाग्निस्तदादित्यस्तद्वायुस्तदु चन्द्रमाः।
तदेव शुक्रं तद् ब्रह्म ता आपः
प्रजापतिः ॥१॥
सर्वे निमेषा जज्ञिरे विद्युतः पुरुषादधि।
नैनमूर्ध्वं न तिर्यञ्चं न मध्ये परि जग्रभत्॥२॥
न तस्य प्रतिमा अस्ति यस्य नाम महद्यशः।
हिरण्यगर्भ इत्येष 'मा मा हिंसी' दित्येषा
'यस्मान्न जात' इत्येषः॥३॥
एषो ह देवः प्रदिशोऽनु सर्वाः
पूर्वो ह जातः स उ गर्भे अन्तः।
स एव जातः स जनिष्यमाणः
प्रत्यङ् जनास्तिष्ठति सर्वतोमुखः ॥४॥



(2) संभृतं पृषदाज्यम्॥

Sāyaṇa takes 'pṛshad-ājyam' (which was gathered, sambhṛtam,

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sampāditam), to mean melted or clarified butter, meant for oblation mixed with curds ('dadhi-miśram-ājyam'). He suggests that the expression signifies all things that are enjoyed by creatures ('evamādi bhogya-jātam sarvam'). Bhaṭṭa-Bhāskara, however, means by 'pṛshad' variegated ('vichitram'), viz. milk drawn from different animals like cow, buffalo, she-goat etc. mixed together; or, it may mean a state of transformed milk (like curds). The importance of 'ājya' (clarified butter) in yajña is explained in *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* (2,37): the yajña is a chariot for the gods (deva-ratho vā esha yad yajñah'), and 'ājya' and 'pra-uga' (name of a hymn recited, also meaning the front portion of chariot - shafts) are like bridles restraining the movement of the chariot ('etāvantau raśmī yad ājya-pra-uge'). Ājya is said to be the essential nutrient which strengthens earth and sky ('anayor dyāvā - pṛthivyoh pratyaksham rasah'). It is clear that the oblation here is the very spirit of manifold creation, which proceeds from the all-comprehending sacrifice.

This is figuratively spoken of as the 'food' (anna), on which all creatures depend. The clarified butter is the food of the fire that represents sacrifice. And the Sanskrit word 'anna' signifies both what is consumed by all beings, and what consumes all beings ('adyate atti cha bhūtāni'). The oblations into the sacrificial fire (clarified butter, faggots, cakes etc) are not only what the fire

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consumes, but they are what nourish the fire. The expression 'pṛshad-ājya' means the variety of food that Prajāpati initially created.

We read in *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (7,2,3,4) that the sacrificial fire, as soon as it is set up, will produce food in the form of water (āpas) and plants (oshadhi). The essential substance in both these forms of food is described as 'ājya' (clarified butter as oblation), to be poured into the fire. This then is the very source and support of all life.

जायत एष एतद्यच्चीयते स एष सर्वस्मा अन्नाय जायते। सर्वस्या अस्यैष रसो यदाज्यम्। अपां च ह्येष ओषधीनां च रसः। अस्यैवैनमेतत्सवस्य रसेन प्रीणाति। यावानु वै रसस्तावानात्मानेनैवैनं एतत्सर्वेण प्रीणाति॥

Rasa, the juice, is the essential element and quintessence in the entire universe; it underlies all forms and all activities. It is therefore that all creatures delight in this. It is the flavour of life. It is in this sense 'gold' (hiraṇya) within the womb of creation (hiraṇya-garbha); and the unseen essence in all creatures (purusha).

The same text (6,3,3,2,1) specifies that this rasa (which is 'ājya') is of the nature of mind ('ā tvā juhomi manasā cha ghṛtena') and that the sacrificer of the rasa (yajamāna) is a biped (dvipād), in the sense that he gives as well as receives ('dvābhyām abhijuhoti, dvipād yajamānah'). The 'ājya' as it emerges from the sacrificed fire (purusha) becomes 'pṛshad'

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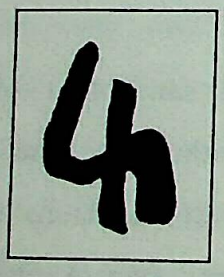
(extracted from several kinds of animals, and therefore variegated, answering to the description of 'all', 'sarvam'), and in turn it is poured again as oblation into the same fire (viz. purusha). This is also in keeping with the words 'yajñena yajñam ayajanta devāh' (already explained).



(3) पशूंस्तांश्चक्रे वायव्यान्॥

From the food that was thus produced by the sacrifice, animals of all kinds were created. The word 'paśu' for animal suggests securing, binding, fastening, tethering, for domestic, professional or sacrificial purposes (pāśayati). *Atharva-veda* (11,2,9 ff) speaks of five kinds of paśus: cattle, horses, humans, goats and sheep:

तवेमे पञ्च पशवो विभक्ता गावो अश्वाः पुरुषा अजावयः॥

The number five (pañkti, five-fold) is an important one in the context of creation: the sacrifice itself is described as five-fold, and the purusha is five-fold, as also the animals. Everything is five-fold, according to *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upanishad* (1,4,13):

स एष पांक्तो यज्ञः। पशुः पांक्तः। पुरुषः पांक्तम्। इदं सर्वं यदिदं च॥

Creation too five-fold: *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (12,3,4,1) mentions that the creator Prajāpati directed the Purusha-Nārāyaṇa to

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sacrifice (purusham tva nārāyaṇam prajāpatir uvācha - 'yajasva yajasveti'), and that out of the sacrifice five-strands of creation emerged: (1) the paśus, (2) the ṛks, yajus and sāman; (3) the purusha: the brāhmaṇa, rājanya, vaiśya and śūdra from his limbs; (4) Chandra, Sūrya, Indra, Agni, Vāyu from the sense - functions of the purusha; and (5) mid-region, sky, earth and the directions from the cosmic body (virāḍ-deha) of the Purusha. This five-fold sacrificial strand is also called 'pañcha-rātra' of the Virāṭ-purusha.

The animals (paśus) of all kinds are described here as belonging to Vāyu (paśūn vāyavyān). This is explained in *Taittirīya-brāhmaṇa* (3,2,1-3) in terms of Vāyu being the supreme god of the mid-region (antariksha), and the gods of this region being the protectors of all animals.

वायवः स्थेत्याह। वायुर्वा अन्तरिक्षस्याध्यक्षः। अन्तरिक्षदैवत्याः खलु वै पशवः। वायव एवैनान् परिददाति॥

Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (4,4,1,15) provides a different explanation: Vāyu indeed is the guide for animals, for vāyu is life and it is by life that animals move about

वायुप्रणेता वै पशवः। प्राणो वै वायुः। प्राणेन हि पशवश्चरन्ति॥

(4) ये आरण्यान् ग्राम्याश्च॥

The paśus (animals) that were thus brought forth belong to two broad categories: wild (āraṇya) and

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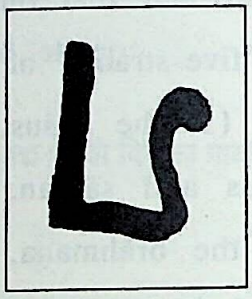
domesticated (grāmya). *Taittirīya-āraṇyaka* (3,11) mentions these two kinds of animals:

य आरण्याः पशवो विश्वरूपाः। विरूपाः सन्तो बहुधैकरूपाः। तेषां सप्तानामिह रन्तिरस्तु॥

ये ग्राम्याः पशवो विश्वरूपाः। विरूपाः सन्तो बहुधैकरूपाः। तेषां सप्तानामिह रन्तिरस्तु॥

There are seven major species in each of the two groups: (1) āraṇya: (i) animals with cloven hoofs (dvi-khura); (ii) beasts of prey (śvāpada); (iii) birds (pakshi); (iv) creeeping reptiles (sari-sṛpa); (v) elephants (hasti); (vi) monkeys (markaṭa) and (vii) animals of the waters (riverine, nādeya); (2) grāmya: (i) cows (go); (ii) horses (aśva), (iii) goats (aja); (iv) sheep (āvi); (v) human beings (purusha); (vi) asses (gardabha); and (vii) camels (ushṭra). This classification is according to the same text.



(9)

(संहितापाठः)

तस्माद्यज्ञात्सर्वहुत ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे। छन्दांसि जज्ञिरे तस्माद्यजुस्तस्मादजायत ॥७॥

(पदपाठः)

तस्मात्। यज्ञात्। सर्वऽहुतः। ऋचः। सामानि। जज्ञिरे। छन्दांसि जज्ञिरे। तस्मात्। यजुः। तस्मात्। अजायत॥

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(अन्वयः)

तस्मात् सर्वहुतः यज्ञात् ऋचः सामानि जज्ञिरे। तस्मात् छन्दांसि जज्ञिरे। तस्मात् यजुः अजायत॥

From that yajña (explained in the previous mantra), the three Vedic divisions were created, as also the metrical forms in which the seer's vision expressed itself.

The three Vedic divisions, ṛchah (representing the devatā Agni, and the terrestrial realm corresponding to the vyāhṛti bhūh), the sāmans (Āditya and suvah), and the yajus (Vāyu and bhuvah) are responsible for the three-fold models of verbal expressions, and in turn for the fire-ritual, according to *Śatapatha-brahmaṇa* (10,5,1-2);

स वा एषा वाक्त्रेधा विहिता ऋचो यजूंषि सामानि। तेनाग्निस्त्रेधा विहितः। एतेन हि त्रयेण चीयते॥

They are the hymns, chants and the prose-formulae, together constituting the sacred utterance udgītha ('ut' symbolising the chants, 'gī'' the prose-formulae and 'tha' the hymnology) (*Chhāndogya*, 1,3,7)

सामवेद एवोद्यजुर्वेदो गीर्ऋग्वेदस्थम्॥

The material forms (chhandas) that emerged from this symbolic sacrifice are principally the following: they differ among themselves in the number of letters arranged in lines.

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	Akshara	Pāda
1. Viparītā - hrasīyasī	19	3
2. Ati-nichṛt	20	3
3. Pāda-nichṛt	21	3
4. Vardhamānā	21	3
5. Pratishṭhā	21	3
6. Ushṇiggarbhā	24	3
7. Yava-madhyā	24	3
8. Gayatrī	24	3
9. Padapaṅkti	25(26)	5
10. Kakup-nyaṅkuśā	27	3
11. Ushṇik	28	3
12. Kakup	28	3
13. Ushṇik - garbhā	28	4
14. Tanu-śirā	28	3
16. Anushṭup - garbhā	29	4
17. Tāvirāṭ	30	3
18. Virāṭ	30	3
19. Mahāpada - paṅkti	31	6
20 Kṛti	32	3
21 Anushṭup	32	4
22. Nashṭa-rūpī	32	3
23. Virāṭ	33	3
24. Bṛhatī	36	4
25. Abhisāriṇi	39	4
26. Vairāja-trishṭup	39	4
27. Paṅkti	40	5
28. Virāṭ-sthāna	40	4
29. Viparītā	40	4
29. Pragātha	40	4
30. Viparitā - virāḍ-sthānā	41	4
31. Virāḍ-rūpā	41	4
32. Jyotishmatī	44	4
33. Jyoti	44	4
34. Trishṭup	44	4
35. Yava-madhyā	44	5
36. Paṅktyuttarā	44	5

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37. Jagatī	44	4
38. Mahāpaṅkti	48	6
39. Ati-jagatī	52	5
40. Śakvarī	56	7
41. Ati-Śakvarī	60	5
42. Aṣhṭi	64	5
43. Atyaṣhṭi	68	7
44. Dhṛti	72	7
45. Atidhṛti	72	8

The mantra may also refer to a sequential emergence: from the sacrifice the hymns (ṛchah) and the chants (sāmāni) arose first, and from them, the metrical forms (chhandas); and from them the ritualistic passages (yajus). All rituals are derived from these ritualistic passages. The expression 'tasmāt' has been employed thrice. It is only in the first case that it refers to the all-consuming sacrifice (sarva-huta); the second time the expression is used, it refers to the hymns and the chants, and the third time, it refers to the metrical forms

(10)

(संहितापाठः)

तस्मा॒दश्वा॑ अजायन्त॒ ये के चो॑भ॒याद॑तः।
गावो॑ ह जज्ञिरे॒ तस्मा॒त्तस्मा॑ज्जा॒ता अ॑जा॒वयः॑ ॥१०॥

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(पदपाठः)

तस्मा॑त्। अश्वा॑ः। अ॒जा॒य॒न्त॒। ये।
के। च॒। उ॒भ॒याद॑तः।
गाव॑ः। ह॒। ज॒ज्ञि॒रे॒। तस्मा॑त्।
जा॒ताः। अ॒जा॒वय॑ः॥

(अन्वयः)

तस्मात् अश्वाः अजायन्त। तस्मात् च उभयादतः ये के, गावः च जज्ञिरे। तस्मात् अजावयः जाताः॥

From that (viz. the all-consuming sacrifice called sarva-huta) the aśvas (stallions as animals for carriage) arose, ubhayādah (the animals with two rows of teeth, upper and lower, viz. beasts of burden like asses and mules), the gāvah (cattle, animals providing food and sustenance) and ajāvayah (goats and sheep). If the words mean animals, they are included in the grāmya or domestic variety, indicated in mantra 8. There is no reason therefore that the words is this mantra which are indicative of the names of animals should refer to those very animals. The significance of the words must be sought elsewhere.

It is to be noted that according to *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (10,5,1,2 and 6,3,1,11) the creator Prajāpati, after the emergence of the three forms of sacred speech and the corresponding three forms of fire, Agni ('sa vā eshā vāk tredhā ... tenāgnis tredhā vihitā', viz the ṛchah, sāmāni and yajuh) entered into the waters along with these

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three forms of sacred speech ('prajāpatis trayyā vidyayā sahāpah prāviśat'). He realized that all things and beings were hidden in these three forms of sacred speech (10,4,2,21 and 22)

अथ सर्वाणि भूतानि पर्यैक्षत्। स त्रय्यामेव विद्यायाँ सर्वाणि भूतान्यपश्यत्। .... स ऐक्षत प्रजापतिः। त्रय्यां वाव विद्यायाँ सर्वाणि भूतानि हन्त त्रयीमेव विद्यामात्मानमभि संस्करवा इति॥

Thereupon, the creator resolved to build up his own body in the shape of a sacrificial altar on the basis of these three forms of sacred speech. The sacrificial altar was thus the first seed of creation. Because it was the first and also the foremost, it was called Agni (from agri) (ibid., 6,1,1, 10-11).

The previous mantra speaks of the emergence of the three forms fof sacred speech, and the present mantra should naturally continue that thread of thought, and focuss attention on the creative aspect of Prajāpati as Agni. According to the mantra, from Prajāpati (or yajña which is sarva-huta), aśva arose. *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (13,3,1,1) tells us that the perceptive organ of Prajāpati swelled and dropped down; it then grew in size and is therefore called aśva (from aśū, vyāptau).

प्रजापतेरक्ष्यश्वयत् तत्परापतत्ततोऽश्वः समभवत् यदश्वयत्तदश्वस्याश्वत्वम्॥

Elsewhere the same text speaks of a creative tear as having fallen from Prajāpati's eyes, which tear (aśru) became the aśva (6,1,1,11):

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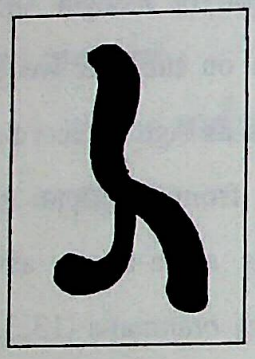
अथ यदश्रु संक्षरितमासीत्सोऽश्वरभवत्।
अश्रुर्ह वै तमश्च इत्याचश्रक्षते॥



The word 'aśva' has two etymological senses: the sense of pervasion (from aśū, vyāptyartha) and the sense of eating or consuming (from aśa, bhojanārtha). The animal horse (ghoṭaka) is called aśva because it speeds across the roads (aśvah kasmād aśnute adhvānam) and it eats much (mahāśano bhavati). However, the expression employed in the mantra does not mean this animal. We read in *Taittirāya-brāhmaṇa* (3,9,16,1) that 'aśva' refers to Varuṇa ('varuṇo vā aśvam'); and texts like *Ṛgveda* (1,50,1 and 1, 115,1) and *Taittirīya-samhitā* (2,2,12,1 and 2,4,12,1) employ the word 'aśva' with reference to Sūrya. A mantra in Ṛgveda (1,164,34) inquires into the prowess of the aśva that rains, the aśva standing here for Varuṇa or Sūrya:

पृच्छामि त्वा वृष्णो अश्वस्य रेतः।

The plural number of the word used in this particular mantra has reference to the multiple origin and manifold nature of the divine 'aśva' (RV aśva-stuti,1,162,1, 'deva-jātasya', comm. 'bahu-devatāsvarūpenotpannasya').

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The horse was no doubt a very useful animal during the Vedic period, and represented facility of travel (*Nirukta*,9,2, 'aśvo voḷhā', sukham ratham iti kalyāṇa-nāma). At a later period, it was also a sacrificial animal (medhyāśva or yajñāśva, the eulogy of which is contained in RV,1,162,1). It is counted among the sacrificial offerings: horses, bulls, oxen, cows and sheep (RV,10,91,14 'yasmin aśvāsa ṛshabhāsa ukshaṇo vaśā meshā avasṛshṭāsa āhutāh'). These animals symbolize vigour and energy, and the offerings are made to Agni, who is equated with Sūrya, Vishṇu and Purusha. The sacrifice is only symbolic. In this mantra, the origin of these animals as sacrificial offerings is also traced to Purusha, who is but Agni.

And the mantra can also be taken to narrate that the Purusha is the single and common source of all animate creation: horses, the animals that have incisor-teeth in both jaws, upper and lower (ubhayādatah), cows (gāvah), goats and sheep (ajāvayah) representing the domestic animals useful to man in many ways. But it must not be forgotten that 'ubhayādatah' can mean time, more specifically the present which is sandwitched between past and future (ubhau avayavau asya, adah paroksha-bhūtah'); and that 'gāvah' may represent earth (gamlṛ gamanārtha, asyām bhūtāni gacchhanti iti; *Nirukta*, 2,5), speech (madhyamikā vāk),or sun ('ādityopi gaur uchyate', 6,2, 'guar ādityo bhavati, gamayati rasān, gachhanty

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antarikshe'). It also means the mid-region or atmosphere (antariksha).

The expression 'aja' ('na jāyate', 'notpadyate') represents drove, the troupe of maruts, or one of the rudras; 'avi' (ava rakshaṇe) means the sun (sūrya), or hill (parvata). 'Aja' is also a name for the waters of the clouds, has the significance of 'moving' or being pushed about (gati-kshepaṇārtha); the clouds are tossed about by the maruts, and the waters move out. 'Avi' also is the name of waters (*Nirukta,* 24, 2), from the root 'vī' (to move about, gati, and to pervade, vyāpti). The sun's rays (gāvah) are responsible for the clouds to pour down rain (ajāvayah). The imagery in this mantra may involve the symbolism of the three realms: sky (aśvā), midregion (ubhayādatah) and earth (gāvah); and the waters that are present in all the three realms (ajāvayah). It has already been explained that the expression Nārāyaṇa (the ṛshi of the sukta) is principally associated with waters.

(11)

(संहितापाठः)

यत्पुरुषं॑ व्यदधुः कति॒धा व्यकल्पयन्।
मुखं॑ किमस्य॒ कौ बा॒हू का ऊ॒रू पादा॑ उच्येते॥११॥

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(पदपाठः)

यत्। पु॑रुषम्? वि। अद॑धुः। क॒ति॒धा।
वि। अ॒क॒ल्प॒य॒न्।

मुख॑म्। किम्। अ॒स्य॒। कौ। बा॒हू इति॑।
कौ। ऊ॒रू इति॑। पादौ॑। उ॒च्ये॒ते॒ इति॑॥

(अन्वयः)

यत् (यदा) (देवाः) पुरुषं व्यदधुः, (ते) (तदा) कतिधा व्यकल्पयन्? (तस्य) मुखं किमासीत्? (तस्य) बाहू कौ? (तस्य) ऊरू कौ? (तस्य) पादा उच्येते?

The subsequent portion of the sūkta assumes the form of a question and the answer to it. This mantra poses the question: When (yat in the sense of yadā) the gods decided to offer the Purusha as the sacrificial offering, what was his form like? The expression 'purusha' suggests a human being; and the question naturally implies a human form for the Purusha, having a face (or mouth), arms, thighs and feet. If the offering is to be a Purusha, what then are his face (or mouth), arms, thighs and feet?

The word 'vyadadhuh' (vi+adadhuh) literally means differently borne or sustained (vividha-prakāreṇa dhārayantah); Sāyaṇa, however, takes it in the sense of 'created with their will' ('saṇkalpena utpādita-vantah'). The word may also mean 'divided', 'apportioned', 'constituted'. The related expression 'vyakalpayan' (vi + akalpayan) is to be taken to mean 'differently imagined' ('vividham kalpitavantah'). The question therefore, is in how many ways did the gods, who bore the Purusha in

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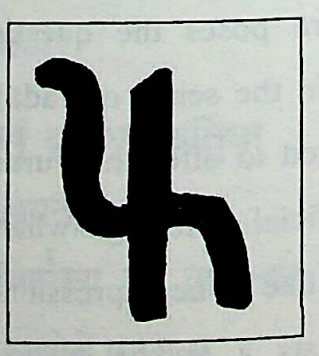
diverse ways, construe the constituent units of this Purusha? The general question is then specifically articulated: what now is his face (or mouth)? What his arms? what his thighs? and what his feet? It must be recalled that Yāska speaks of the gods as having human forms and of spoken of in terms of their organs (7,6) :

पुरुषविधाः स्युः। विविधैरंगैः संस्तूयन्ते॥

But who are these devas themselves? Sāyaṇa explains that they are the life-forces or the vital currents of the creator or protector of all beings ('prajāpateh prāṇa-rūpāh devāh'). The gods willed and produced the Purusha for the sake of performing a sacrifice (yajña), which was all-inclusive (sarva-huta). The Purusha is clearly the constituted (suggested by the word 'vyakalpayan') and structured (suggested by the word 'vyadadhuh') instrument as well as object of sacrifice (suggested by the later statement in mantra 16, 'yajñena yajñam ayajanta devāh'). The very processes of phenomenal existence (the devas) brought forth the primordial transactional Being called the Purusha, a composite entity, which in its turn was responsible for the worldly processes of animate and inanimate orders.



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(12)

(संहितापाछ्ठः)

ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीद्बाहू राजन्यः कृतः।
ऊरू तदस्य यद्वैश्यः पद्भ्यां शूद्रो अजायत॥१२॥

(पदपाठः)

ब्राह्मणः। अस्य। मुखम्। आसीत्। बाहू इति। राजन्यः। कृतः।

ऊरू इति? तत्। अस्य। यत्। वैश्यः।पत्ऽभ्याम्। शूद्रः। अजायत॥

(अन्वयः)

अस्य (पुरुषस्य प्रजापतेः) मखं ब्राह्मणः आसीत्। बाहू राजन्यः कृतः। तत् (तदा) अस्य (पुरुषस्यः प्रजापतेः) ऊरू वैश्यः (आसीत्)। पद्भ्यां शूद्रः अजायत॥

The answer to the question raised is given here. The Purusha who was got ready to be sacrificed, had brāhmaṇa as his face (or mouth), the rājanya (or kshatriya) as his arms, the vaiśya as his thighs; and the śūdra was born from his feet.

At first glance, the mantra seems to make a reference to the origin of the four caste-groups (varṇas) in the Indian society. In fact, this is the explanation most often given to this mantra. Even Sāyaṇa suggests that the mantra seeks to assign different limbs of the Purusha's body for the four caste-groups (jāti). During the days of Sāyaṇa (14th Century A.D), caste-groups had not only come to stay, but had become important in

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social organization. It was natural therefore for him to take the names 'brāhmaṇa etc. in the sense of caste-groups. But it must be noted that the caste-system was altogether alien to Ṛgvedic corpus and to the society prevalent when this corpus was compiled. It has been a matter for conjecture how this mantra came to be incorporated into the Sūkta; the non-believers in the 'apaurusheyatva' of the Veda have even suggested that the entire Sūkta is an interpolation.

It is true that this idea of the four groups has not been repeated anywhere in the Ṛgvedic corpus; and the word 'śūdra' does not occur anywhere else in the entire *Ṛgveda* (as P.V. Kane has rightly pointed out, *History of Dharma-sastra,* Vol.2, pp. 18-104). the expression 'brāhmaṇa' is to be found only in this mantra, and nowhere else in the *Ṛgveda*. The word 'brahma' however has often been employed, but in the sense of a hymn or a hymn-maker (mantra-kartṛ, sūkta-drashṭṛ) (as, e.g. 4,6,11; 5,52,2; 10,14,5; 10,105,8).

And the word 'rājanya' for a kshatriya is employed only in this hymn, and nowhere else in the Ṛgvedic corpus. Likewise, the nomenclature 'vaiśya', and, as pointed out earlier, the word 'śūdra'. 'Kshatra' in *Ṛgveda* means area, land (later kshetra), and also valour, might and majesty (as attributes of Indra, Varuṇa or the Maruts, cf. 7,6,42;8,25 etc.). There

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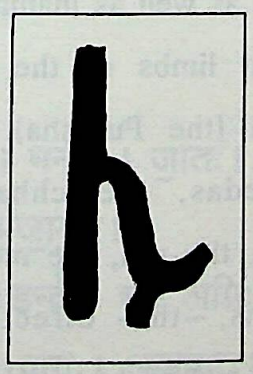
are also references to kshatriyas as virtuous rulers of the land (e.g. 4,42,1 'rāshṭram kshatriyasya viśvāyor viśve'; 7,64,2 'ā rājānāmaha ṛtasya gopā sindhu-patī kshattriyā'; 'dhṛtavratā kshatriyā kshatram ānaśuh', where the descriptions pertain to Mitra and Varuṇa.). And 'viśa' (for the later vaiśya) signifies in the Ṛgvedic context any group of people; it is a collective expression (cf. 3,5,3; 3,6,3; 3,11,5; 4,6,7 and 8; 4,9,2; 5,1,2; 5,8,3; 6,48,4; 8,35,12 and 16 etc.).



Even in *Yajurveda,* where references are more obviously to the four social groups, the explanation is symbolic: as, for instance, in 14,28-31, where there is a suggestion that the three currents (prāṇa, udāna and vyāna) of the Purusha (or Prajāpati) represent the brahma (viz. the brāhmaṇa), the ten toes, two thighs and torso represent kshatra (viz. the kshatriyas), the ten vital currents, the five elements, mind, consciousness and ego represent 'śūdrārye' (viz. the śūdras and vaiśyas)

तिसृभिरस्तुवत ब्रह्मासृज्यत...
पञ्चदशभिरस्तुवत क्षत्रमसृज्यत...
नवदशभिरस्तुवत शूद्रार्यावसृज्येताम्... ॥

References to Brahma and Kshatra are to be found in this

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Veda quite frequently, and as 'yajamānas' in the sacrificial context (1,18;5,22; 6,3; 7,21; 11,14; 18,39 and 43;19,5; 20,25; 26,19; 32, 16; 38,14 etc.). *Aitareya-brāhmaṇa* (34,19) states that Prajāpati created yajña, and after that the brahma and kshatra:

प्रजापतिर्यज्ञमसृजत। यज्ञं सृष्टमनु ब्रह्मक्षत्रे असृज्येताम्॥

The two denote powers that make a sacrifice possible. And, according to *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (11,2,7,16) these two powers are established in the common people, viz. the vaiśyas:

ब्रह्मक्षत्रे च विशि प्रतिष्ठिते॥

The same text identifies the three factors, brahma, kshatra and viśa, with the three vyāhṛtis, bhūh (the earth), bhuvah (midregion), svah (sky); Prajāpati created the three powers from the three vyāhṛtis (2,1,4,11 and 12).

भूरिति वै प्रजापतिः। इमामजनयत। भुव इत्यन्तरिक्षं। स्वरिति दिवम्। एतावद्वा इदः सर्वं यावदिमे लोकाः सर्वेणैवाधियते॥

भूरिति वै प्रजापतिः ब्रह्माजनयत। भुव इति क्षत्रः स्वरिति विशम्। एतावद्वा इदः सर्वं यावद् ब्रह्मक्षत्रं सर्वेणैवाधियते॥

The mantra is to be taken along with other mantras in the context of postulating a common origin for the entire universe, animate as well as inanimate. From different limbs of the allegorical persona (the Purusha) the gods, the Vedas, the chhandas, all animals, the sun, the moon, earth, horizons, the directions, the seasons and all human beings were

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created. This theme covers the mantras from 9 to 14.

(13)

(संहितापाठः)

चन्द्रमा मनसो जातश्चक्षोः सूर्यो अजायत।
मुखादिन्द्रश्चाग्निश्च
प्राणाद्वायुरजायत॥१३॥

(पदपाठः)

चन्द्रमाः। मनसः। जातः। चक्षोः।
सूर्यः। अजायत।
मुखात्। इन्द्रः। च। अग्निः। च।
प्राणात्। वायुः। अजायत॥

(अन्वयः)

(पुरुषस्य) मनसः चन्द्रमा जातः। (तस्य) चक्षोः सूर्यः अजायत। (तस्य) मुखात् इन्द्रः च अग्निः च (उत्पन्नौ)। (तस्य) प्राणात् वायुः अजायत॥

If the previous mantra spoke of what aspects of the universe emanated from the gross limbs (like head, arms, thighs and feet), the present mantra refers to the origination of the moon, the sun, the gods Indra and Agni, and Vāyu from the the Purusha's mind, eyes, face and the vital force respectively.

The moon (chandra) and the mind are intimately related, even as the sun (sūrya) and vision. The face, being the most attractive aspect of the human form, is related to Indra (the most expressive spirit) and Agni (the quality of brightness and luminosity). The vital force of

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course is in terms of vital currents which are but forms of air (prāṇa-vāyu).

The expression 'chandra' is derived from the root 'chadi', which means 'to delight the mind' (āhlādane; chandatīti chandrah). Sūrya is called so because he moves about in the midregion, or because he procreates all creatures, or again because he inspires all beings to action and movement (cf. *Nirukta,* 12,14 'sūryas sartervā, suvater vā, svīryater vā'). There are references to the spirit of the sun who is in the solar orb being also in the right eye of every individual. This has been explained while the import of the Gāyatri-mantra was discussed.

Agni is described not only as the primaeval and the foremost among the gods (agnir agre prathamo devatānām), but as head of the sky (agnir mūrdhā divah). Indra is of course the king of the celestial denizens (indro yātovasitasya rājā); he is the head of the devas. Both Agni and Indra represent the aspect of superiority and sovereignty, even as the face in the human figure. Vāyu (corresponding to Purusha's prāṇa) is so called because he moves about within the body and makes all movements and actions possible (*Nirukta,* 10,1 'vāyur vāter vā syād gati-karmaṇah' from 'vā gati-gandhanayoh'; alternately from 'iṇ gatau', according to Sthaulāshṭhīvi, 'eter iti').

The moon outside corresponds to the mind within; the sun above to the vision in the eye; the principle of heat and light

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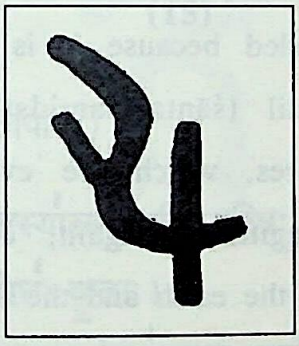
(Agni) and the power of the organs of sense (Indra) to the active principles within the head; the air of the atmosphere to the vital currents within the physical constitution.



(14)

(संहितापाठः)

नाभ्या आसीदन्तरिक्षं शीर्ष्णो द्यौः
समवर्तत।
पद्भ्यां भूमिर्दिशः श्रोत्रात्तथा
लोकाँ अकल्पयत् ॥१४॥

(पदपाठः)

नाभ्याः। आसीत्। अन्तरिक्षम्।
शीर्ष्णः। द्यौः। सम्। अवर्तत।
पत्ऽभ्याम्। भूमिः। दिशः।
श्रोत्रात्। तथा। लोकान्।
अकल्पयन्॥

(अन्वयः)

(पुरषस्य) नाभ्या अन्तरिक्षं आसीत्। (तस्य) शीर्ष्णः द्यौः समवर्तत। (तस्य) पद्भ्यां भूमिः, (तस्य) श्रोत्रात् दिशः, तथा (देवाः तस्य देहात्) लोकान् अकल्पयन्॥

From the Purusha's navel, atmosphere was formed, from his head the sky, from his feet the earth and from his organs of audition the space. Thus all the worlds were fashioned (by the gods out of the limbs of the Purusha).

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The idea of navel (nābhi) according to Yāska (*Nirukta* 4,21) involves the suggestion of the central-most point or the spot where all the organs are centred (nahanam eva nābhih). It is the centre of the entire physical constitution. From the Purusha's navel, was formed 'antariksha', literally the mid-region; but the word has several nuances. Yāska explains that the atmosphere or midregion is so called because it is located in between the earth and sky, or because it is the very extreme limit (anta) of the earth (kshā), or because in it are contained the earth and the sky, or again because it is the very immortal and immutable sky within the body (2,10):

> अन्तरिक्षं कस्मात्? अन्तरा क्षान्तं
> भवत्यन्तरेमे
> इति वा शरीरेष्वन्तरक्षयमिति वा॥

It is what is immutable amidst mutable things, the eternal amidst transient things. Like Purusha's navel, this is the hub of all creation. The entire universe is in reality located in this. Skanda-svāmin explains that antariksha is so called because it is perfectly tranquil (śānta) amidst all the creatures, which are ever active and agitated. Again, antariksha keeps the earth and the sky apart. The earth is represented by the Purusha's feet, while the sky is symbolic of the Purusha's head. Alround the antariksha is the space (directions), emanating from the Purusha's ears (located at the sides). All the worlds and the realms of our experience have thus been fashioned out of the Purusha's body.

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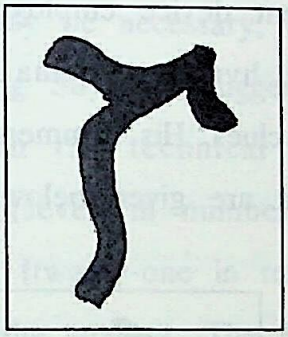

(15)

(संहितापाठः)

सप्तास्यासन् परिधयस्त्रिः सप्त
समिधः कृताः।
देवा यद्यज्ञं तन्वाना अबध्नन्पुरुषं
पशुम् ॥१५॥

(पदपाठः)

सप्त। अस्य। आसन्। परिऽधयः।
त्रिः। सप्त। समिऽधः।
कृताः ॥देवाः। यत्। यज्ञम्।
तन्वानाः। अबध्नन्। पुरुषम्।
पशुम्॥

(अन्वयः)

अस्य (यज्ञस्य) सप्त (७) परिधयः आसन्।
त्रिःसप्त (२१) समिधः कृता। देवाः यत् (पुरुषं)
यज्ञं तन्वानाः (तं) पुरुषं (एव) पशुं अबध्नन्॥

The mantra reverts to the abiding imagery of the primordial sacrifice (yajña), which was responsible for all creation, and which was idential with the Purusha as the cosmic person. The bright and luminous forces that were earlier brought out (viz. the devas) created all things that we know of.

And in this, they had to depend on Purusha himself. The act of creation by these forces was itself in the nature of a sacrifice (yajña), to accomplish which the employment of the very Purusha, their own progenitor, became indispensable. This dependance on

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Purusha to fulfil the purpose of creation is allegorically referred to as the Purusha being a 'paśu' (sacrificial animal). The text of the mantra would literally mean as follows:

Seven were the enclosing sticks (viz. the constituent parts) of the sacrifice; and thrice-seven (viz. twenty-one) were the sacred faggots (viz. sticks of fire-wood to be ritualistically dropped into the fire). The gods in order to conduct the sacrifice bound the Purusha as the sacrifical animal.

While the import is obvious enough, the description of the sacrifice, involving the numbers 'seven' and 'twenty-one' is rather enigmatic. This, however, is a frequent device employed in the Vedic hymns. Sāyaṇa provides some clues. His comments on this mantra are given below:

अस्य सांकल्पिकयज्ञस्य गायत्र्यादीनि सप्त च्छन्दांसि परिधयः आसन्। ऐष्टिकस्याहवनीयस्य त्रयः परिधयः उत्तरवेदिकास्त्रय अदित्यश्च सप्तमः परिधिप्रतिनिधिरूपः। अत एवाम्नायते-न पुरस्तात्परिदध्यादादित्यो ह्येवोद्यन्पुरस्ता द्रक्षांस्यपहन्तीति।

तथा समिधस्त्रिःसप्त त्रिगुणीकृतसप्तसंख्याका एकविंशतिः कृताः। द्वादशमासाः पञ्चर्तवस्त्रय इमे लोका असावादित्य एकविंशः। (तैत्तिरीयसंहितायां ४,१,१०,३) इति श्रुताः पदार्था एकविंशतिदारु-युक्तेन्धनत्वेन भाविताः॥

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It may be necessary, before considering Sāyaṇa's suggestions, to explain the technical terms 'paridhi' (seven in number) and 'samidha' (twenty-one in number) used in the mantra. The former expression ('pari', alround; 'dhi', to place) denotes the procedure of priorly protecting the fire-altar on all sides by ceremonially placing the sacred grass-blades (darbha, kuśa) or faggots. This enclosure is meant to ward off the evil forces which seek to disturb the ritual (rakshoghna). It is usual to place these protective devices on three sides of the altar (north, south and west), leaving the east open, for the sun rising in that direction will himself protect the ritual, driving away the evil forces (cf. *Taittirīya-samhitā*, 2,6,6,3 'na purastāt paridadhāty ādityo hy evodyan purastād rakshāmsyapahanti'). The latter term, 'samit' etymologically signifying 'burning brightly', refers to the faggots collected from some species of trees regarded as sacred (like aśvattha, palāśa etc.); the fire in the altar is fed by these faggots, put into it to the accompaniment of prescribed chants. This is an important detail in the sacrificial act. The faggots are always in prescribed numbers, and are often smeared with clarified butter. This sacrifice, however, is mental in character (mānasam yajñam); it consists of resolves and intentions (sāmkalpika-yajña). It does not therefore necessitate actual 'paridhis' and 'samidha'. Even the ritual protection of the altar and the offering of faggots can only be

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symbolic (as in many another passage in *Ṛgveda,* like 10, 130, 3 and 10, 81, 4, manīshiṇo manasā pṛchchhata'). The numbers associated with them (seven and twenty-one respectively) are likewise symbolic. They are significant only in their suggestions.

According to Sāyaṇa, the number 'seven' stands for the seven metrical forms (chhandas), like gāyatri. It is the chhandas that covers the Vedic idea, and protects it; the very etymological significance of the expression 'chhandas' is to conceal and protect. Alternately, the idea of 'paridhi' may suggest the enclosing sticks. As indicated earlier, each of the five-altars has three sides covered (leaving out the eastern direction). The two altars, āhavanīya and uttara-vedi, have thus six paridhis; and the sun (Āditya) in the eastern direction is the seventh paridhi. The number seven has other suggestions which are relevant in the Vedic context, but which have not been indicated by Sāyaṇa. For instance, in *Yajurveda* (17, 79) we read:

सप्त तेऽग्ने समिधः सप्तजिह्वाः सप्तऽऋषयः
सप्तधाम प्रियाणि।

सप्त होत्राः सप्तधा त्वा यजन्ति
सप्तयोनीरापृणस्व घृतेन स्वाहा॥

The passage speaks of the seven fuels for the sacred fire (samidha), the seven blazing flames (jīhvā: named Kāli, Karālī, Manojavā etc.) the seven seers (ṛshi: the five main vital currents, prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, udāna and

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samāna, together with two of the minor vital currents, devadatta and dhanañjaya), the seven fond locations (dhāma: janma or birth, sthāna or residence, nāma or name, dharma or norms of right living, artha or material possessions, kāma or sensual pleasures, and moksha or liberation from the cycle of existence), the seven offerings (hotra, the seasons: vasanta, grīshma, śarat, hemanta and śiśira), and the seven sources of transaction (yoni: the five mahābhūtas together with mahat and ahamkāra). There are also references to the seven dhenus (forms of speech), the seven vipras (the sages who are affiliated to Āṅgirasa), the seven sindhus (rivers), and seven raśmis (rays of the sun).

Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (6,1,1,1-6) has an account of creation, where the number seven becomes an important detail. Prior to creation, nothing (asat) was there. What now is this 'nothing'? They call the seers (ṛshis) nothing. They were indeed there at the beginning. Who are these seers? The vital currents or the life-principles (prāṇa) are called the seers. It is these that made creation possible with their effort and austerity, characteristic of the seers. The most important among them is Indra, the chief vital current (mukhya-prāṇa); and Indra by his power inspired the other vital currents to move and act. In fact, Indra was so called because of this power to inspire. These vital currents acted and brought into

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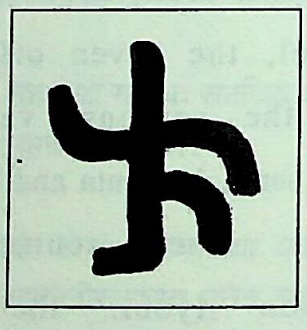
being seven different purushas. These vital currents thereupon deliberated that if these seven purushas are distinct from each other, the purpose of creation will not be served. They then coalesced these seven purushas into one Purusha: two purushas above the navel, two purushas below the navel, two purushas on the two sides, and the seventh purusha as the very support and foundation (pratishṭhā) for the other six. The other six purushas accommodated their individual essence, eminence and excellence (śrīh) in this seventh one, who then became the head (śirah), on which the other six depend. This composite Purusha, identical with the essence, eminence and excellence of the vital currents as they coalesce to form the body (called śarīra, because of the common support for all of them) is known as Prajāpati. And he is seven-fold, and is of the nature of Agni (viz. yajñāgni). It is therefore that the sacrificial fire also is seven-fold. Seven is the number of constituent parts of the Purusha-yajña.



असद्वा इदमग्र आसीत्। तदाहुः 'किं तदसदासी' दिति। ऋषयो वाव। तेऽग्रेऽसदासीत्तदाहुः। 'के ते ऋषय' इति। प्राणा वा ऋषयः। ते यत्पुराऽस्मात् सर्वस्मादिदमिच्छन्तः श्रमेण तपसा रिषंस्तस्मादृषयः।

स योऽयं मध्ये प्राणः। एष एवेन्द्रः। तानेष प्राणान्मध्यत इन्द्रियेणैंद्धयदैन्ध तस्मादिन्ध इन्धो ह वै तमिन्द्र इत्याचक्षते परोक्षम्। परोक्षकामा हि देवाः।

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त इद्धाः सप्त नाना पुरुषानसृजन्त। तेऽब्रुवन्। 'न वा इत्थं सन्तः तक्ष्यामः प्रजनयितुं। इमान्त्सप्त पुरुषानेकं पुरुषं करवामे' ति। त एतान्त्सप्त पुरुषानेकं पुरुषमकुर्वन्। यदूर्ध्वं नाभेस्तौ द्वौ समौब्जन्यदर्वाङ्नाभेस्तौ द्वौ पक्षः पुरुषः पक्षपुरुषः प्रतिष्ठैक आसीत्॥

अथ यैतेषा सप्तानां पुरुषाणां श्रीः। यो रस आसीत्तं ऊर्ध्वं समुदौहंस्तदस्य शिरोऽभवत्। यद्यच्छ्रिय समुदौहंस्तस्माच्छिरः। तस्मिन् प्राणा आश्रयन्त। तस्माद्वेवैतच्छिरोऽथ यत्प्राणा आश्रयन्त तस्मादु प्राणाः श्रियोऽथ यत्सर्वस्मिन्नश्रयन्त तस्मादु शरीरम्।

स एव पुरुषः प्रजापतिरभवत्। स यः स पुरुषः प्रजापतिरभवदयमेव स योऽयमग्निश्चीयते। स वै सप्तपुरुषो भवति॥

It may also be noted that Yāska looks upon the number seven as the seven rays of the sun (*Nirukta*, 4,26 'sapta ādityaraśmayah')

The devas, who intended performing the primordial sacrifice are only the effective vital currents of this Purusha (Prajāpati). Sāyaṇa also describes them as 'prajāpatiprāṇendriya-rūpāh'.

As regards the 'samidhā', twenty-one in number (thrice seven, triguṇī-kṛta-sapta-samkhyākā), Sāyaṇa's suggestion is that the number represents twelve months of a year, five seasons (excluding śiśira from the usual six), three realms (earth, midregion and sky), together with the sun (Āditya). There is another explanation that the number refers to the twenty-one tattvas (aspects of reality): ten organs of sense and action (indriya), five elemental categories (bhūta), five vital forces (prāṇa), and mind (manas). Alternately, the tattavas are primordial and unmanifest nature

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(prakṛti), the initial impetus for expression (mahat), subjectivity (ahamkāra), five gross elements (mahā-bhūta), five subtle elements (sūkshmabhūta), five organs of apprehension (jñānendriya), and three fundamental strands of reality (guṇa).

(16)

(संहितापाठः)

य॒ज्ञेन॑ य॒ज्ञम॑यजन्त दे॒वास्तानि॒
धर्मा॑णि प्रथ॒मान्या॑सन्।
ते ह॒ नाकं॑ महि॒मानः॑ सचन्त॒ यत्र॒
पूर्वे॑ सा॒ध्याः सन्ति॑ दे॒वाः ॥१६॥

(पदपाठः)

य॒ज्ञेन॑। य॒ज्ञम्। अ॒य॒ज॒न्त॒। दे॒वाः।
तानि॑। धर्मा॑णि। प्र॒थ॒मानि॑।
आ॒स॒न्। ते। ह॒। नाक॑म्।
म॒हि॒मानः॑। स॒च॒न्त॒। यत्र॑। पूर्वे॑।
सा॒ध्या)। सन्ति॑। दे॒वाः॥

(अन्वयः)

देवाः यज्ञेन (सांकल्पिकेन) यज्ञं (पुरुषरूपं) अयजन्त। तानि प्रथमानि धर्माणि आसन्। यत्र (यस्मिन् नाके) पूर्वे देवाः साध्याः सन्ति ते महिमानः नाकं सचन्ते॥

The devas (who are of the nature of the vital energies of the Purusha, 'prajāpati-prāṇa-rūpāh') performed the sacrificial ritual (Purusha himself who is of the nature of yajña) by a ritual act (in the mind, through will and deliberation). The manner in which the ritual was conducted became

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the very first and most important ordinances. The great ones (mahātmānah), who worship the Purusha in this manner ('tad-upāsakāh', Sāyaṇa), attain to the highest realm (the Virāṭ-purusha), where reside the ancient worshippers, the devas and sādhyas.

The expression 'yajña' has been used here in three different forms: as the object of an act (yajñam), as an instrument of action (yajñena), and as the act itself (ayajanta). The object of the action is Purusha (or Prajāpati) himself. He is called yajña (cf. 'yajño vai vishṇuh'): by yajña is meant the soul of all beings. So we read in *Śatapattha-brāhmaṇa* (14,3,2,1):

> सर्वेषां वा एष भूताना सर्वेषां देवानामात्मा यद्यज्ञः तस्य समृदधिमनु यजमानः प्रजया पशुभिर्ऋध्यते॥

The action involves the instrumentation, will, deliberation, resolve and contemplation (mānasena saṁkalpena). And the action itself is described as worship (ayajanta pūjitavantah).

Yajña as an instrument of worship may indicate, according to Sāyaṇa, the nirmathyāgni, when yajña as the object is the kindling of āhavaniyāgni (yajñena nirmathyāgninā, yajñam homa-sādhanam āhavanīyam ayajanta pūjitavantah). Yajña may also mean the paśu in its instrumental sense, and the ritual 'agni' as the object (yajñena agninā paśubhūtena yajñam yashṭavyam agnim). In the adhyātma context, yajña as the object of the ceremonial approach is Vishṇu, and yajña as an instrument denotes knowledge of that divinity (yajñena jñānādi-yajñena yajñam vishṇum ayajanta).

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Yāska points out that yajña in all three forms indicates only Agni, and cites a passage from a *Brāhmaṇa* in support (*Nirukta*, 12,41).

अग्निनाग्निमयजन्त देवाः। अग्निः पशुरासीत्तमालभन्त, तेनायजन्त॥

(Comm. by Durgāchārya - अग्निं स्थावरजङ्गमभावेन इति। दर्शनवतः प्रयोक्तुः सर्वमिदमग्निरित्यभिप्रेत्य ब्रवीति-'यज्ञेन', 'अग्निना' स्थावरजङ्गमभावमापन्नेन हविर्भूतेन यज्ञं अग्निमेव सर्वदेवताभूतं आदित्यादिप्रनाडिकया महान्तमात्मानं अयजन्त देवाः दैवभाविनः॥)

Agni is identified with purusha, the great self (mahān ātmā) of all beings and all divinities: it is all this (sarvam idam agnih). This is the perception of the knowing ones or those who directly visualize divinity (daiva-bhāvinah). Agni for them assumes material forms (inert and stationary) as well as mental and spiritual forms (dynamic and mobile). The act of sacrifice regards the fire that is worshipped as Agni, and the 'havis' that is offered also as Agni. The worshippers are described here as 'devas' (viśve-devas, all-gods or the seven seers, 'sapta-ṛshayah'), and 'sādhyas' (the vital forces or the rays of light that prevail in the universe, 'sādhyā iti sarva ete prāṇāh raśmayo vā'). The devas are distinguished by wisdom, light and eminence, while the sādhyas are energetic accomplishers. Yāska (12,4,6) says 'sādhanat teshām eshā bhavati'. The two groups are mentioned together to indicate that yajña is a conjoint operation of knowledge and action ('jñāna-karma-samuchchaya-kāriṇo yajamāna-bhāvam-āpannāh'). And

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this is how the ancients (pūrve) looked upon it, and attained to the highest state possible for the performers of yajña.

Durgāchārya comments significantly:

ते (देवाः साध्याः) च तानि (धर्माणि कृत्वा नियमेनैव अनन्यभावित्वात् सन्तः। तमेव नाकं महान्तमात्मानमेकान्तसुखम्। सचन्ते तद्भावमेव ते आपेदिरे। किं त एव? इति। नेत्युच्यते। यत्र पूर्वे...। शब्दार्थापदेशनित्यत्वाद्यत्र पूर्वे पूर्वतरे च ज्ञानकर्मसमुच्चयकारिणः आसते सन्ति जज्ञुः इत्यर्थः। विज्ञायते हि 'विश्वसृजः प्रथमे सत्रमासत' इति। शिरो ह्यध्यात्मं द्युस्थानभुक्तिः॥

The conjoint employment of jñana and karma has been the ancient practice for attaining to the most exalted state of bliss, arising out of the realization of the Virāṭ-purusha, viz. the self of all beings, abiding in the head (identified with the dyus-sthāna).

This attainment has been called here 'nāka', which means ordinarily heaven (svarga) स्वर्गो वै लोको नाको देवाः॥. The word is derived from the negation of worldly misery and stress (na-aka): the explanation is that 'ka' signifies happiness; the absence of it, the suffering and pain, is 'a-ka'; a further negation of this state of suffering is 'na-aka' or 'nāka' ('kam iti sukha-nāma: tat-pratishiddham pratishiddhyeta': 'na asmin akam asti'). The import is that a proper performance of yajña as detailed above would result in a state of bliss. We read in *Kāṭhaka-samhitā* (2,2) that those who reach this realm get over all suffering ('na vā amum lokam jagmushe kiñcha nākam'). Yāska identified 'nāka' with Āditya or the sun-god who resides in the high heavens or sky (dyauh) and who

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lifts the beings to the world of bright and pure light (*Nirukta,* 2,14):

नाक आदित्यो भवति नेता रसानाम्। नेता भासां ज्योतिषां प्रणयः॥

This is supported by the Ṛgvedic passage (1,34,8).

तिस्रः पृथिवीरुपरि प्र वा
दिवो नाकं रक्षेथे द्युभिरक्तुभिर्हितम्॥

and by another passage (1,19,6):

ये नाकस्याधि रोचने दिवि देवास आसते॥

Durgāchārya interprets 'nāka' to signify ultimate and immutable happiness, which according to him, is identical with the Great Self ('mahāntam ātmānam ekānta-sukham'). And he points out that the attainment (sachante) of the devas and siddhas is by way of becoming that very self (viz. Virāṭ-purusha) ('sachante tad-bhāvam eva āpedire').

And this is the first (viz. foremost, prathamāni mukhyāni) effective and enduring approach (dharmāṇi', practices conjoined with relevant wisdom 'tāni karmāṇi tathāvidha jñāna-yuktāni'), for becoming one with the Purusha (viz. mahān ātmā) ('mahadātma-bhāvāpattaye). The goal of life then is this state of bliss (nāka), which, according to Yāska (*Nirukta,* 2,13) is the same as 'dyuloka' (the high heaven) or Āditya (viz. Purusha):

साधारणान्युत्तराणि षट् दिवश्चादित्यस्य च॥

Sāyaṇa rightly points out that this is the brief statement of the very purpose of the entire hymn known as Purusha-sūkta, elaborated in sixteen mantras:

पूर्वं प्रपञ्चेनोक्तमर्थं संक्षिप्यात्र दर्शयति॥

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